SPECIFIC PRINCIPLES

OF

KASHMIR SAIVISM

Dr. B.N. PANDIT

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FOREWORD

PREFACE

The present work is a collection of articles on the non-dualistic Śaivism of Kashmir which is intended to clarify certain philosophical and theological principles central to this philosophy. Most of these principles are specific to Śaiva non-dualism and its Trika system of yoga and are not commonly included in other schools of thought. In a few cases, these concepts have been discussed in various other philosophies, but Kashmir Śaivism has its own distinctive approach on these issues.

It is the author's intention that this work on Śaivism will be useful to the general reader who is interested in learning more about the philosophy and theology of Kashmir Śaivism as taught and explained by its ancient authors. While this book was not intended to be a scholarly treatise, nevertheless there are details included which should be of interest to scholars and readers who are already familiar with the philosophy.

Because these chapters were designed as individual articles, the basic points of the philosophy are introduced as needed in each one. Therefore, it is possible to read them independently of each other and in any order. However, there is also a logic to their order, and a general building of understanding should occur when they are read as presented.

Like all Indian philosophical systems, Kashmir Śaivism

grew and developed in the presence of other schools of thought. Down through the centuries there were ongoing debates, interchanges, assimilations, and competition among various belief systems which influenced each other powerfully along the way. Because of this, it is basically impossible to study one of these philosophies without presenting comparative material from the other major schools of the same period. Therefore, the reader will find references to Vedānta, Sāṁkhya-yoga, Buddhism, and so on, in each of the following essays.

The first chapter of this work deals with the Parādvaita principle of Kashmir Śaivism. Parādvaita is the term used in this philosophy to establish the concept of absolute non-dualism. This approach to life sees everything in the universe as Consciousness. There is only one conscious Reality, and because of Its divine, blissful, and independent nature, It creates the universe, evolving into the trinity of all forms of diversity, unity in diversity, and absolute unity.

The second chapter presents the two closely related principles of theistic absolutism and spiritual realism both of which are central to this philosophy. The ancient sages of Kashmir Śaivism did not look for the truth in logic and intellectual speculation. They relied instead on their experiences during deep yogic states to guide them in understanding and clarifying age-old philosophical dilemmas. They discovered the Absolute within themselves and found that they were one with It. They studied the Self that lay behind

the mind and the ego, and found that it was divine, creative energy. God was not some distant ruler, or some inert entity. These sages recognized that He was within everything, was the vitality of life itself, and was always the one transcendent Reality as well. In this way Kashmir Śaivites taught the principle of theistic absolutism.

For centuries Indian philosophers have been debating whether this world is real or an illusion. In the process of watching the unfolding of their own creative energy during meditation, the sages of Kashmir found the source of all creation, and witnessed how everything in this universe evolves from this one absolute Reality into manifestation which is also real. Because all creation exists within the Absolute, they established the principle of spiritual realism.

The third chapter examines the various aspects of the states of waking, sleeping, dreamless sleep, and intuitive Self-revelation. These are known as the four states of animation, and although they have been discussed by many schools of Indian thought, the Śaivism of Kashmir views them in its own way and brings to light many things about them which are unknown to other systems of philosophy.

The fourth chapter introduces the question, 'what is life?' and goes on to discuss the various levels and states of living beings from ordinary mortal people to various forms of heavenly beings and finally to Śiva. Kashmir Śaivism classifies seven main levels of living beings, and has

developed a clear understanding of the mental and physical states of each. This section also includes a discussion of the various limitations (malas) that effect the beings living in these levels and states.

Grammarians belonging to the school of Bhartṛhari have recognized four types of speech. However, philosophers of Sanskrit grammar have been unable to clarify the nature and character of the subtler forms of thought-free awareness (paśyanti) and supreme speech (parā-vāc). The authors of Kashmir Śaivism discovered that awareness is the basic essence of all speech as well as the foundation for creative expression. Their views on these concepts are reviewed in Chapter 5.

The sixth chapter deals with the Spanda principle of Kashmir Śaivism. This concept is not found in any other school of Indian thought. Spanda is the spiritual stirring of the divine essence of the Absolute. The masters of this philosophy discovered that all of creation was nothing but this extraordinarily subtle vibration or oscillation. It is spanda which keeps the Absolute continuously involved in the five divine activities of cosmic creation, sustenance, and dissolution, and in individual Self-oblivion, and Self-recognition.

The seventh chapter gives a summary of the classical twenty-five tattvas of the Sāmkhya system and then goes on to discuss the eleven levels discovered by Śaivism which go beyond

purusa and prakrti.

The eighth chapter describes the principle of divine grace that causes ordinary people to move beyond their limitations and seek right understanding and liberation. This philosophy has developed a thorough understanding of grace and its various forms. The basic nine types of śaktipāta are discussed in this section.

Chapter 9 explains the yoga system of the Trika Śāstra as discussed in the Tantrāloka, by Abhinavagupta. This form of yoga is unique to the Śaivism of Kashmir. Aside from a detailed study of śāmbhava, śākta, and ānava yoga, this chapter presents the different varieties and sub-varieties of these three main forms of Trika yoga as well.

This is followed by a chapter on aesthetics in Kashmir Śaivism. This philosophy contains no puritanical or restrictive doctrines. Rather, it is distinctive for embracing life in its totality. The chapter examines the various spiritual practices associated with the arts, particularly music, as well as the practice of using objects and actions pleasing to the senses as aids to liberation.

Finally, Chapter 11 brings the reader into the present century with a discussion of the vilāsa principle of Neo-Śaivism. This concept was developed by Ācharya Amrta-vāgbhava in one of his works entitled Ātmavilāsa. The chapter gives a short biographical account of the Acharya, and then goes on to describe various aspects of the divine exuberance

(vilāsa) of the Absolute as it is presented in Ātmavilāsa.

At the back of the book there are several appendices which should be of further help to the reader interested in the Sanskrit quotes and terminology. Where ever possible we have tried to use the English equivalent to the Sanskrit term, or have included a translation within the text. However, the glossary also offers cross referencing of concepts, and some helpful summaries of various categories like the tattvas.

I would like to give my thanks to my daughter, Dr. Girija Sharma, who was a great help in the ~~proof reading and~~ editing of the original manuscript of the present work.

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INTRODUCTION

The word philosophy can be used to translate darśana in Sanskrit, but in fact darśana is something far greater than philosophy. By philosophy we usually mean that love and pursuit of superior wisdom which develops through intellectual and logical reasoning. Darśana, on the other hand, is basically a revelation or an intuitive experience of the truth brought about by the practice of yoga. Its logical expression through language is a secondary type of darśana.

It is important for western students of Indian philosophy to bear in mind that many of its fundamental principles have been arrived at experientially during the practice of deep meditation, and are not just the result of logical reasoning. Indian philosophers were often great yogis as well as fine scholars, and their practice of a given philosophy through various forms of yoga was considered essential for gaining understanding of the highest truths.

Down through the centuries, India's greatest philosopher-sages have described their experiences of the truth as it was revealed to them during the practice of yoga. These truths were then translated into various philosophical systems depending on the level of clarity which a given sage had

reached, and their ability to transfer their experiences into logical form. Also, different systems of yoga brought about different states of consciousness and therefore different levels of truth were experienced.

Classical Indian philosophy generally recognizes four different states of consciousness: jāgrat, the waking state; svapna, the dreaming state; suṣupti, the deep, dreamless state; and turiyā, the state of intuitive revelation.* Indian philosophers discovered, practiced, and propagated various systems of yoga which lead to different levels of revelation (darśana) within these states of consciousness. The following examples of different schools of yoga and the various levels of consciousness attained by their practitioners will serve as a background for discussing the particular darśana of Kashmir Śaivism.

The yoga of Patañjali is known to lead to a state of subtle animation within a form of deep, dreamless sleep (suṣupti) in which the practitioner comes face to face with his true Self. This Self is not to be confused with the ego, with that limited individual sense of "I" that we refer to as my "self," with a small "s." The true Self is experienced through its own luminous and vibrant consciousness thereby transcending the usual physical and mental knowing of the waking (jāgrat), and dreaming (svapna) states. This experience, called yoga-samādhi, has within it various levels of purity, but basically

*These states are described in detail in Chapter 3.

it yields a direct realization of the nature of the pure and finite I-consciousness.

A similar form of darśana is available to students of the Sāmkhya-yoga systems which followed and adopted the samādhi-yoga of Patañjali. Adept practitioners of Sāmkhya-yoga experience a state called nirvikalpa-samādhi in which they transcend the sense of ego (ahaṅkāra) along with the ability to think (manas) and understand (buddhi). All three attributes are absorbed into that yogic form of deep sleep leaving the individual Self absolutely alone in a thought-free (nirvikalpa) state. This is known as the kaivalya state in the Yogasūtra of Patañjali.

The darśana of both these schools differs from the revelation available through the practice of Kashmir Śaivism because the practitioner does not experience the infinite and all pervading nature of the Self, nor its character of divine omnipotence. What is more, Sāmkhya-yoga does not involve itself with the subject of God, either through darśana or logical exposition. Even as great a yogin as Patañjali did not consider Īśvara to be the Absolute God, but understood him to be just an ever-pure and ever-liberated puruṣa of a unique kind who was responsible for transmitting yoga to Kapila, one of the system's earliest teachers. Īśvarakṛṣṇa, the builder of the current Sāmkhya philosophy, does not even mention the name of God.

The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophy is another example of a

form of darsana that contrasts with Kashmir Śaivism. Practitioners of this system experience the Self as consisting of pure and calm finite consciousness freed from all physical, mental and sensual disturbances. In their yoga-samādhi they have the darśana of a self-evident tranquil consciousness freed from any movement of the ego. They see themselves as attaining perfect freedom from any propensity towards either objective or subjective activity. However, they consider the phenomena of this world and its creator as entities different from the Self. As with the above schools of yoga, the path of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika does not reveal to its practitioners the divine nature of the Self, and so their assertions on the principle of theism are deduced from logical reasoning rather than from darśana.

Buddhist philosophers deny both the existence of God and the individual soul. In their practice of yoga they attain such a deep state of suṣupti that they lose all sense of witnessing the constant flow of vijñāna, that stream of consciousness which is always present in the mind. Buddhists believe that ordinarily there is a constant fluctuation in the mind between the sense of I-ness called ālaya-vijñāna and the sense of this-ness called pravṛtti-vijñāna. They explain that this fluctuation arises due to a basic form of universal ignorance which causes each successive momentary mental movement to be affected by accumulated past impressions. According to Buddhists, this process deceives people into assuming that there is something continuous about them, like a

soul, or a Self. In their state of deep susupti, Buddhists practitioners experience the cessation of even the subtle current of vijñāna and have called this state nirvāna. Literally translated, nirvána means an extinction of the current of the light of individual consciousness. In this state of susupti they experience a void in which there is no apparent Self, vitality, or creative energy.

The above systems of yoga all lead the student into spiritual experiences which this author views as various states of deep sleep, or susupti. Let us now turn our attention to those schools whose practices offer a more refined form of darśana, or revelation. The yoga known as Nirodha-samādhi, and practiced by the ancient teachers of Advaita Vedānta, leads students to the revelation of a constantly existent consciousness of the Self that serves as a witness to all the different steps in susupti as well as to the stream of momentary flickers of consciousness (vijñāna). The Vedantins call this continuously existing consciousness Ātman. They use the term Brahman to stand for that aspect of all pervading consciousness that also serves as the original foundation for all of creation. Seeing Brahman as absolutely pure, Vedāntins have classically been unable to locate the source of phenomenal existence in Him. They feel that there must be some impure element, in addition to Brahman, which is responsible for phenomenal manifestation. They call this element avidyā, the beginningless ignorance. The Vedāntins conceive of this

ignorance as having both an individual and a universal aspect which results in people mistakenly understanding the single Brahman as being God, the soul, and insentient matter. According to Vedāntins, these three entities do not really exist. Just like the sons of a barren woman, or a mirage on the desert, they appear falsely to people caught in the grip of avidyā. They proclaim that Ātman, known as Brahman, is the only true reality, and is the eternal, infinite, and absolute Consciousness. They describe Brahman as sat, (existence), cit, (consciousness), and ānanda, (blissfulness), because they experience these states as they discover the Self in nirodha-samādhi. However, since the revelation of the truth attained through this level of samādhi is still affected by the limitations of individual consciousness, it does not allow a practitioners to experience their infinite and divine potency. This shortcoming causes advaita-vedāntins to look for a creative source outside of Brahman, and to consider people who experience Him as God, soul, and all creation as being ignorant.

There are several systems of yoga which lead aspirants to a still higher level of truth as it is revealed at various stages of turyā, the fourth state of animation which leads to a spontaneous revelation of the real nature of the Self. These systems include Pāñcarātra, Śāktism, and Śaivism. The practitioners of these schools of yoga understand that all phenomena are a creation manifested by God, the absolute

Consciousness endowed with infinite divine potency to create, to preserve, and to dissolve all phenomena.

Within this group of yoga traditions that lead to experiences of Self-revelation (turyā), there are various levels of understanding the Self. Practitioners who have attained the lower levels of turyā understand that everything in the world is controlled by the divine powers of God, but they conceive of all things as being separate or different from Him. These aspirants remain in the experience of diversity known as "dualism" (dvaita). Pasupatas and the Madhva Vaiṣṇavas, followers of the Vaiṣṇava philosopher Madhvācarya, are examples of yogic groups that experience this form of pluralism or diversity.

Those yogins who discover the truth at an intermediate level of turyā, experience a kind of unity within the diversity of God, soul, and world. They discover that they are one with God, but do not entirely lose their individual limitation, and so remain partly distinct from His universal aspect. This is known as the state of unity in diversity (bhedābheda), and at this intermediate level, it is attained only after the practitioners shed off their mortal form. Such aspirants are popularly known as "qualified non-dualists" (Viśiṣṭādvaitins). In addition, they include the followers of Rāmānuja, aspirants on the paths of Śaiva-siddhānta and Śrikanthamata, and the followers of Vaiṣṇava teachers like Bhāskara, Nimbārka, and Caitanya.

Yogins, discovering the truth as it is revealed at still higher levels of turyā, experience God in everyone and everything. They shed off their individuality and expand themselves into the infinite existence of God as soon as they leave their mortal form on the exhaustion of their remaining stock of merits and demerits for this life (prārabdha-karman). Successful practitioners of Vīraśaivism are examples of yogins who attain this form of revelation. Also, those Vedāntic aspirants who do not allow themselves to get lost in logic, and who practice some Tantric method of yoga, such as great teachers like Gaudapāda and Śaṅkara, also attain unity with the Absolute.

The Saivism of Kashmir teaches a system of yoga which leads to the highest level of Self-realization, and yields a revelation of the innermost secrets of the nature of the Self. In the practice of this yoga, the student is able to pass beyond the various levels of susupti and turyā and finally become immersed in the blissful experience of the Self as one with Absolute Consciousness. The student of Kashmir Śaivism discovers that what others experience as the void is actually pulsating with divine creative energy and that this creative energy is their very essence. Further, the practitioners of this yoga experience everyone and everything as the Absolute Lord, endowed with infinite divine potency and joyfully manifesting the whole universe. They see everything as His divine play, and recognize that everything is actually Him.

This totally monistic view of the world was termed "immediate non-dualism (pratyaksādvaita) by Narasimhagupta, the father of Abhinavagupta. Pratyaksādvaita is that view of monism which sees total unity even in mundane perceptions. One who lives in this state of unity actually sees monism with their eyes and feels it through all their senses.

Absolute non-dualism is the basic principle of the philosophy of Kashmir Śaivism, and throughout the discussions which follow it will be important for the reader to remember that all the principles of this philosophy rest on this non-dualistic foundation. In other words, whether we are dealing with principles of realism, theism, or absolutism, all of them are to be viewed through the lens of absolute monism. This non-dualistic view is present in the "Śiva-drsti" of Somānanda where he discusses pratyaksādvaita in the fourth and fifth chapters of that work. Although it has been given various names, it is most generally referred to as parādvaita, the supreme and absolute non-dualism. As will be discussed in Chapter 1, it is significantly different from the monism of Vedānta, and from other schools of Śaivism and Vaisnavism. The principle of absolute monism has neither been expressed in Pāśupata-Śaiva, nor in Siddhānta-Śaiva, nor in Vīraśaiva, nor in the Śaivism of Śrīkantha and Appayadīksita.

Aside from absolute non-dualism, the teachers and authors of Kashmir Śaivism discovered and propagated several other important principles of spiritual philosophy and theology which

set it apart from most of the other Indian systems like the Brahmanic philosophies, the six darsanas*, the monkish philosophies of Buddhism, Jainism, and Nathism, the devotional schools of Vaisnavism, and the Saivism of the South.

Theistic absolutism is an example of one of these special principles. There are many theistic schools of thought in the East and in the West, but all of them avoid absolutism in one way or another. Most of them are based on the concept of a personal God living in a divine abode. Even the pantheists of the West, who have some similarities to Kashmir Saivism, do not see God as an absolute reality beyond all phenomena. Advaita Vedānta is a school that maintains absolutism, but it does not accept theism as an absolute truth. For Vedāntins, a belief in God is caused by the misunderstanding of people caught in avidyā, beginningless ignorance. By contrast, Kashmir Saivism posits the theory that there is only the eternal existence of infinite and pure Consciousness, lying beyond the reach of speech, mind, and intellect. This Consciousness is an absolute reality - the only Absolute Reality. What is more, this philosophy has established theism as the essential nature of Absolute Reality, and maintains that this experience and understanding of God explains and settles all the perennial problems that other schools have with creation and phenomenal existence.

Vaisnava schools do not accept absolutism at all. The so

*The six darsanas refer to the six classical schools in Indian philosophy: Sāmkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaiśesika, Pūrva-mīmāmsā, and Advaita Vedānta.

called "pure non-dualism" (śuddhā-dvaita) theory of Vallabha, even though it is quite similar to Kashmir Śaivism in its pantheistic views, gives little attention to absolutism. The great Hindi poet Sūradāsa, an ardent follower of Vallabha, has cleverly criticized and ridiculed absolutism in his poetic songs related to the Bhramara-gīta episode in the life history of Lord Krisna. But Kashmir Śaivism, even though it is every bit as devotional towards the divine entity as the school of Vallabha, insists on transcendental absolutism when dealing with the highest and the basic eternal Reality. According to this view, the Absolute is so inexplicably eternal, infinite, and pure, it can not be perceived, imagined, know objectively, or expressed through any words, because it lies beyond the reach of all such faculties of intelligence. Abhinavagupta says the following about it:

> "It is very difficult to understand the character of this state. It is therefore said to be that form of transcendental reality beyond which nothing else exists."

Creation or manifestation is another philosophical issue that has been heavily debated among the various schools of Indian philosophy. What is the relationship between the creator and the created? The very question suggests a dualism, and many schools have developed theories of creation and creator which reflect the duality that pervades the standard intellectual process. In fact there is quite a range of approaches to this subject. Different schools of Indian thought have established either monism, pluralism, dualism, or

mono-dualism as the fundamental principle of their philosophy.

Kashmir Śaivism alone establishes a totally non-dualistic form of theistic absolutism which ultimately includes and expands on all other theories of manifestation. This approach establishes that there is only one 'beginningless' entity, and that is variously described as the Absolute, Absolute Consciousness, Paramasiva, the Ultimate, the Lord, Absolute Reality, God, and so on. Therefore Kashmir Śaivism does not agree with the Vedāntic principle of ignorance (avidyā), even as an explanation for creation. Instead, it solves this key problem of monistic philosophies with the principle of spanda, the vibration of creative power.

Spanda will be explored in detail in chapter 6, but we will discuss it briefly here in relation to the issue of manifestation. Historically, this concept first enters the ancient texts of Kashmir Śaivism in the writings of Vasugupta. It was further explained and clarified in turn by Bhaṭṭa Kallaṭa, Somānanda, Utpaladeva, and Abhinavagupta. (This concept was mentioned in the Anuttara-prakāśa-pañcāśikā by Ādinātha, and also appears in a more ancient work by the sage Durvāsas entitled Para-śambhu-mahimna-stava, but was developed as a key theory of Kashmir Śaivism by the above mentioned philosophers.)

According to Kashmir Śaivism, the Absolute is calm and tranquil because it is free from the turbulence caused by the

five kleśas* of the Yoga-Sūtra. But it is not calm like the void or pure space on which the Buddhists base their theories, because that amounts to insentience. The Absolute is Consciousness. It is always Self-conscious, meaning it is always aware of itself and its divine nature. This Self-awareness of the Absolute is a subtle form of activity which has two essential qualities or aspects: First, Consciousness is Self-luminous; the light of Consciousness (prakāśa) requires no other source of illumination. This is its aspect of jñāna or knowing. Second, the process of becoming aware of Itself (vimarśa) is the Absolute's aspect of action (kriyā). This action is a kind of subtle stir which gives rise to joy and the creative impulse. This subtle movement is not a physical motion or any form of mental restlessness. Rather, it can be described as a spiritual stirring which corresponds to the sensation everyone has at moments of unity during peak experiences. This stirring of Self-awareness is spanda. It makes Absolute Consciousness vibrant and expansive, and it is this activity which is the basic source of all creative manifestation. Everything that exists, sentient and insentient, is a result of this stirring of spanda. Even the Vedāntic theory of beginningless ignorance is thus a creation caused by the spanda of Absolute Consciousness. The five divine activities of cosmic creation, preservation, absorption, obscuration, and revelation are basically the outward

*Ignorance, egotism, desire, aversion, tenacity of mundane existence.

manifestations of the divine powers of God brought about through spanda, His essential nature. This theory of creation is one of the most important spiritual discoveries of Kashmir Śaivism.

There are a number of important philosophical theories that are woven into this view of creation. God, while appearing as all phenomena, does not undergo any change at all in His basic character. There is no change in the Absolute because all manifestation brought about by spanda occurs as a reflection. In other words, the divine powers of God, becoming reflected outwardly through the vibrative nature of spanda, appear as all phenomena. This principle of reflective manifestation is the cosmogonical principle of Kashmir Śaivism and is a corollary to the principle of spanda.

Kashmir Śaivism asserts that all phenomena that ever appear in the universe enjoy an eternal existence within Absolute Consciousness. These phenomena do not exist within Consciousness in the same way that things exist in a room. Rather, they exist and shine within the Absolute as pure Consciousness. For example, a plant exists in a seed in the form of the potential of the seed to appear as a plant. The whole universe exists within Absolute Consciousness in the form of its divine potency. Consciousness is capable of appearing as anything and everything in the universe by Its own free will. Therefore, the philosophy asserts that all things have an eternal and absolutely real existence within pure and

absolute Consciousness. This approach is known as spiritual realism and is another example of a theory that is particular to Kashmir Śaivism.

This form of realism is considerably different from the realism of other philosophical systems, for instance the material realism of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Sāṃkhya schools. Also, this realism should be differentiated from certain forms of idealism in both India and Europe. These idealists generally consider phenomenal existence to be the outward manifestation of past mental impressions appearing like things in a dream. According to Kashmir Śaivism, the things of this world are not a dream because they enjoy a permanent existence in time, present a common target for the activities of many people, and serve a particular function. The things of this world are real for all practical purposes. In other words, the authors of Kashmir Śaivism have worked out a pragmatic realism.

Bondage and liberation is another important issue which Kashmir Śaivism has clarified in a unique manner. Most of the other schools of Indian philosophy assert that everyone is responsible for all their own misery and can only attain liberation through their own efforts. But Kashmir Śaivism, while advocating personal effort for the attainment of freedom from limitation, finds the basic source of both bondage and liberation in the divine creative expression of God. In this philosophy, the world and our lives are often described as a divine drama or play in which Paramaśiva is the sole producer,

director, and cast of characters. He is everything wrapped up in one. It is He who, in the initial part of His divine play, obscures His divinity and purity, appears as an ordinary person with limitations, and becomes progressively denser and more ignorant as a result. But in the final part of this play, He bestows His divine grace on a person who then turns away from their misery, becomes interested in spiritual philosophy, comes into contact with a teacher, receives initiation into spiritual practices (sādhanā), attains correct knowledge of the theoretical principles of absolute non-dualism, practices yoga, develops intense devotion for the Lord, and finally recognizes that they are none other than the Lord Himself.

This play reveals the principles of obscuration and divine grace known as nigraha and anugraha as taught in Kashmir Śaivism. These have been mentioned in certain other schools of Indian philosophy, but have been developed philosophically in Kashmir Śaivism alone. The topic of divine grace known as śaktipāta has been intricately analyzed into twenty-seven main forms in Abhinavagupta's Tantrāloka. There is no other philosophical system that has produced such a detailed study and understanding of śaktipāta.

Kashmir Śaivism also developed an integrated and effective method of spiritual practice which includes intense devotion, the study of correct knowledge, and a special type of yoga not known to other systems of practical philosophy. These three approaches are meant to be carefully integrated to produce a

strong and vibrant practice. Yoga is the main path that leads to Self-realization, theoretical knowledge saves a yogin from getting caught at some blissful but intermediary level of spiritual progress, and devotion gives them the strength and focus with which to digest correctly the powerful results of yoga and so avoid their misuse. This is a practice for both the mind and the heart. The teachings offer a fresh and powerful understanding of life which develops the faculties of the mind, while the devotional aspects of Kashmir Śaivism expand the faculties of a student's heart. Combined together, both faculties help the student reach the highest goal to which Śaiva yoga can lead them.

The yoga system of Kashmir Śaivism is known as the Trika system. It includes many methods of yoga which have been classified into three groups known as śāmbhava, śākta, and āṇava. Śāmbhava yoga consists of practices in direct realization of the truth without making any effort at meditation, contemplation, or the learning of texts. The emphasis is on correct being, free from all sorts of becoming. This is a yoga which transcends the use of mental activity, and the knowing mind. Śākta yoga consists of many types of practices in contemplation on the true nature of one's real Self. Āṇava yoga includes various forms of contemplative meditation on objects other than one's real Self, such as the mind, the life-force along with its five functions (the five prāṇas), the physical form along with its nerve-centers, the

sound of breathing, and different aspects of time and space.

Trika yoga teaches a form of spiritual practice which is specific to Kashmir Śaivism alone. This system, along with its rituals, has been discussed in detail in Abhinavagupta's voluminous Tantrāloka which is one of the world's great treatises on philosophy and theology. Unlike many other forms of yoga, the Trika system is free from all types of repression of the mind, suppression of the emotions and instincts, and starvation of the senses. It eliminates all self-torturing practices, austere vows or penance, and forcible renunciation. A Śaiva practitioner need not leave their home, or roam as a begging monk. Indifference (vairāgya) to worldly life is not a precondition for practicing Trika yoga. Sensual pleasures automatically become dull in comparison with the indescribable experience of Self-bliss. This is a transforming experience which naturally gives rise to a powerful form of spontaneous indifference to worldly pleasures. Finally, Trika yoga is open to all people regardless of caste, creed, and sex, who through the Lord's grace have developed a yearning to realize the truth, and who become devoted to the Divine.

This collection of essays has been written in accordance with the teachings and writings of five great philosopher-sages from the Kashmir Śaivite tradition. The first is Vasugupta, a truly advanced yogin who attained the highest levels of Trika yoga. Like all these ancient masters, through his practice of yoga he attained a direct realization of the principles and

doctrines of Śaiva monism. As there are no existing books by Vasugupta, we must assume he remained mostly absorbed in the practices themselves and in teaching the Trika doctrines to disciples like Bhaṭṭa Kallaṭa, who learned the essence of the theory and practice of the spanda principle from him and went on to develop it in his Spanda-Kārikā. Bhaṭṭa Kallaṭa wrote several other works on Kashmir Śaivism most of which have been lost. Spanda-kārikā and Spanda-vṛtti are the only two works from his pen which are still available. He was followed by Somānanda and Utpaladeva, both of whom were his younger contemporaries. All three of these men were great yogins, who had direct realizations of the philosophical truths contained in the Saiva monism of Kashmir. They were also considered perfect masters of the Trika system of Kashmir Śaivism and of the Kaula system started by Matsyendranātha. None of their works on Kaulism is available at present, but references to these books, and quotations from them, prove that they were indeed masters of this system as well. It is clear that they were also well read scholars, and extremely knowledgeable about the various philosophies of that period.

These sages were followed by Abhinavagupta who also was a great yogin and a perfect master of all the subjects of study prevalent in his time. He even studied and practiced other forms of theology in order to expand and perfect his knowledge. He, too, was a master of both the Trika and Kaula systems of Tāntric sādhanā. He was not only a master of the

philosophy and theology of these two systems, he had perfect mastery over their ritual aspects as well. His Tantrāloka, dealing with the philosophy, theology, and ritual of the Trika and Kula* systems of Tantric yoga-sādhana, is a unique work on these subjects.

These are the five great authors of Kashmir Śaivism whose authority on the subject is unquestionable. They were followed by many scholars, writers and practitioners who carried their mission ahead. They wrote commentaries and books useful for beginners, a form of teaching which is still living in Kashmir. The works and commentaries of these later scholars are very helpful in studying the works of the above-mentioned masters of Kashmir Śaivism. However if one compares these later works with the teachings of the original five, it becomes clear that their views and interpretations are not always entirely correct. For this reason, I have not relied on these later commentators while writing this work on the specific principles of Kashmir Śaivism.

Contemporary students and scholars of this philosophy generally begin their research with the works of Kṣemarāja. This author feels that Kṣemarāja did little to clarify the subject matter. He apparently wanted to supersede his predecessors in popularity as a scholar and a writer and so developed a complicated and confusing style in order to impress readers with his greatness as a learned man and writer of

*Kula and Kaula are the same word in different grammatical form.

complex issues. Further, his writing betrays a strong prejudice against the truly great and effective teacher, Bhaṭṭa Kallaṭa, whom Abhinavagupta mentions with great respect. It appears that Abhinavagupta recognized this tendency in Kṣemarāja and was critical of it. Even though Kṣemarāja was the most efficient scholar and writer among all the known disciples of Abhinavagupta, the great teacher never includes his name among his disciples in any of his works. It is possible that the above-mentioned shortcomings were the cause of Abhinavagupta's indifference towards as efficient a disciple as Kṣemarāja.*

This collection of essays covers a variety of important principles specific to Kashmir Śaivism which have been discussed and clarified by its ancient masters. Unfortunately most of their original texts are available only in Sanskrit, and if translated, are too often written in an obtuse style of Indian logic. Those people who are seeking the truth, who do not know Sanskrit, or who are not familiar with Indian logic, require a good text in English that will clarify the wisdom of this philosophy. The work in hand is aimed at fulfilling this purpose.

*Kṣema, the cousin of Abhinavagupta, mentioned by name in the Tantrāloka, is without doubt Kṣemagupta, who is definitely different from Kṣemarāja. Kṣemarāja did not belong to the family of Guptas, but to a family of scholars who had produced great Śaivas like Bhaṭṭa Bhūtirāja, Helāraja, Indurāja, Ādityarāja, etc.

Chapter 1

Parādvaita, the Absolute Non-dualism.

While monism is one of the central principles of most Indian philosophies, it has been interpreted differently by various schools. The most popular school of monism among scholars is the Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkarāchārya. However, many Indian philosophers have taken exception to this school's concept of monism. Vallabhāchārya, an ancient Vaiṣṇavite philosopher, for example, called his own principle "pure non-dualism" (suddhādvaita), because in his view Advaita Vedānta explained the problem of phenomenal existence on the basis of two mutually different and independent entities and was therefore not a true monism. The first entity is known as Brahman, the pure consciousness, and the second is avidyā, or inexplicable ignorance. Both are said to be beginninglessly existent.

Abhinavagupta, the great eleventh century sage of Kashmir Śaivism, also found several logical and psychological defects in Śaṅkara's school of Vedántic monism and therefore named his monism parādvaita, or absolute non-dualism. He used this term specifically to differentiate it from Advaita Vedāntic monism which he has thoroughly examined and criticized in several of his works. An example of this can be found in his Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vivṛtti-vimarśinī where he says that "the principle of the absolute existence of Brahman, along with avidyā as his upādhi (a adventitious element attached to Him),

cannot be accepted as a definite principle of pure monism," because it implies the eternal existence of two entities, Brahman and Universal ignorance (I.P.V.V.Vol III,p.404). This amounts to a clear dualism.

Criticizing the principle of avidyā as being the source of creation, Abhinavagupta says:

> "There is self-contradiction in saying that avidyā is indescribable and in describing it as the entity that assumes the whole infinitely varied display of phenomena. To say that finite beings are deluded by the beginningless ignorance brought about by avidyā, the divine power of God, implies that such a power is surely describable, and it is actually described in that way. Besides, a non-substantial entity could not have the capacity to manifest such an extraordinary show. If it is really capable of creating, then it must be a truly existent entity and not an apparent and indescribable one" (Ibid p.80).

In the very beginning of that voluminous work, he also criticizes another theory of creation, the principle of vivarta (appearance). This theory has two aspects. First, it can refer to the appearance of some non-existent phenomenon like a dream or a mirage. According to this aspect, the universe does not exist, but only appears as an existent reality. Vivarta can also refer to the appearance of something which is other than it seems, as when a rope is mistaken for a snake, or a shell for silver. According to this aspect of vivarta, Brahman exists, but appears falsely as God, finite soul, and insentient matter. In Abhinavagupta's words:

> "It has been said that vivarta is the manifestation of an unreal entity. How can it be unreal when it is manifested? This anomaly has not been given due consideration" (Ibid., Vol. I, p.8).

To sum up, Abhinavagupta is saying that an entity which

appears clearly and creates the whole universe, must be something real and substantial and should be describable as such.

In his commentary on Parātrimśikā, Abhinavagupta insists that his philosophic view about the creative nature of absolute reality should not be confused with the views of either Sāmkhya or Vedānta, as it is specifically a Śaiva view alone (P.Tr.V.p 181).

Explaining the creative nature of Brahman as taught in Śaivism, he says,

> "Brahman is one compact whole, that power of bliss which projects itself externally by a kind of spilling out of the universal creative potency lying within. Infinite Consciousness gets evolved into all phenomenal existence just as the word Brahman means both the all-pervading infinite and the evolved entity" (Ibid, p.221).

Comparing these Śaivite views on Brahman with those of Advaita Vedānta, he adds:

> "The Brahman of Śaivism is not the same as that of Advaita Vedānta which comes very close to the final principle of nihilistic Buddhism" (Ibid,p.221).

Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vimarśinī is Abhinavagupta's most important work on the theoretical aspect of Śaivism. In discussing this issue there, he criticizes both the Advaita Vedāntins and the school of Buddhist idealism, known as Vijñānavādin, when he says:

> "Finding the contradiction between unity and diversity quite irreconcilable, some thinkers (ie Vedāntins) stated that apparent diversity was inexplicable because of its being avidyā (basic ignorance), while others (ie Buddhists) said that diversity was false because it was an outcome of saṃvṛti (mental ideation). Thus both of them deceived themselves and others as well" (I.P.V. - B vol II - p- 131

II, p.131).

In another context in the same work, he discusses the topic in considerable detail and argues as follows:

> "If it is argued that the unity of absolute Consciousness is a reality, and that (the appearance) of diversity is due to the disturbance caused by avidyā, it is irresolvable who is responsible for this defect of avidyā (ignorance). For on the one hand, how could Brahman, who is pure knowledge, assume the form of ignorance? And, on the other hand, in reality there is no other creature to whom ignorance could occur" (Ibid p.201).

Abhinavagupta refuses to accept avidyā as an inexplicable entity. He argues:

> "If avidyā is said to be inexplicable, it is not clear to us for whom it is inexplicable. On the one hand, its essential character becomes manifest, on the other hand, it is said to be an indescribable entity. Which is it? If this means that its existence cannot be explained or justified through logical arguments, then we ask what kind of logic is it that could contradict direct experience? How can an entity, which shines in experience, be unjustifiable" (Ibid p.202)?

Next Abhinavagupta introduces a supposition about creation characteristic of Advaita Vedanta.

> "Brahman, the pure Consciousness, shines alone as an existent truth in nirvikalpa cognition, a direct experience free from ideation, and phenomenal diversity appears as a result of mental ideation" (Ibid p.202).

He refutes this argument as follows:

> "Who conducts such ideation? If Brahman conducts it, He becomes stained by avidyā. None other than He exists, so who else could conduct it" (Ibid p.202).

A further argument on this point is then presented in these words:

> "How can a distinction be established that knowledge without ideation is real while knowledge with ideation is unreal, when both of them shine with equal brilliance" (Ibid p.202)?

The Advaitins might finally attempt to take shelter in the authority of Vedic scriptures, but Abhinavagupta refutes this also as follows:

> "If it is argued that unity is established on the basis of scriptural authority with disregard for mundane knowledge, then it is pointed out here that scriptures themselves hold authority in the field of diversity and have diversity as their character" (Ibid p.203).

The whole discussion is finally concluded by Abhinavagupta in the following passage:

> "If the absolute monistic existence of pure Consciousness is accepted, then its independent activity of bearing diverse forms can not be explained at all. But all this can be justified and explained if it be accepted as endowed with freedom in the form of Self-awareness" (Ibid p.203,204).

This is how Abhinavagupta presents and discusses the views of Śaṅkarāchārya's school of Advaita Vedānta. One can easily understand why Abhinavagupta felt the need to differentiate Śaiva monism from the apparent monism of the followers of Śaṅkarāchārya, while coining the term parādvaita in the process of these debates. In order to fit the new term into couplet form, he occasionally used synonyms like paramādvaita, paramādvaya, parādvaya, or simply the word advaya which was convenient in metrical composition (see appendix to Chapter I for examples).

The main difference between the Vedāntic monism discussed and accepted by Śaṅkarāchārya, and the parādvaita developed by the authors of Kashmir Śaivism, is probably more a difference of logic than of faith. As we have already seen, Vedāntic teachers place the source of phenomenal existence outside of

absolute Consciousness and view its creative power as dependent on the external element they call ignorance (avidyā), while parādvaita teachers insist that this creative power is the essential nature of absolute Consciousness and the source of all phenomenal manifestation.

This may have been the logic of Vedāntic teachers like Śaṁkarāchārya, and Gauḍapāda, but their belief system and practice was undoubtedly somewhat different. Both of them were devoted theists like the authors of Śaiva monism, and they used various forms of spiritual practice which were similar to the śāktopāya of Kashmir Śaivism. Both of them used tantric methods in their spiritual practice (sādhanā).*

However, since these teachers were interested in refuting Buddhist logic, they studied it thoroughly and in the process became influenced by many of the Buddhist arguments. Since the above mentioned shortcomings in their philosophical approach were also present in the logic of their main opponents, the Buddhist logicians, the Advaitins ignored them and made no attempt to remove them. After all, debaters need not pay attention to inconsistencies held in common.

It should also be noted that Śaṁkarāchārya did not live long enough for his logical thinking to reach full maturity. One reason that the deficiencies pointed out by Abhinavagupta appeared in Śaṁkarāchārya's logical works is that he composed

*These facts become evident when one reads their tantric works on practical Vedānta, e.g., Vidyā-ratna-sūtra and Prapañcasāra Tantra, and are particularly evident in their hymns to the Mother goddess, e.g., Subhagodayastuti and Saundaryalaharī.

most of them when he was still in his twenties. Further, it is indeed a shame that most of the prominent post-Śaṅkara Advaitins ignored the works of the great Vedāntic teachers on practical aspect of the philosophy and concentrated instead on their logical works. These later Advaitins focused mainly on debating and logic instead of practicing the philosophy in order to experience an actual realization of Brahman. Śriharṣa, one of the greatest writers of Vedāntic logic, goes so far as to boastingly declare his preference for logical debate over practice.

This tendency to focus on the intricacies of logical argumentation caused Advaita-Vedānta to drift towards a point very close to the nihilism of the Buddhists. It was because of this trend in Advaita philosophy that Abhinavagupta felt the need to clarify the theistic and absolutist monism of Kashmir Śaivism which had been previously discovered and developed by Somānanda and Utpaladeva.

Although there is no doubt that the seeds of such nihilistic thinking are present in the passages of some important logical works of Śaṅkarācārya, still, his prominent works on practical Vedānta deserve due consideration, as does his young age during the period in which he composed the commentaries on the Prasthāna-trayī. These would undoubtedly have been different in character had he lived long enough to write them at a more mature age.

It is with an open-minded approach to the basic principles

of other schools of philosophy that Abhinavagupta states in his Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vivṛtti-vimarśini, "If a Vedāntic aspirant identifies avidyā with māya and takes the latter as the divine potency of Brahman, he also can attain the highest perfection." (I.P.V.V., vol III, p 405). He makes similar remarks about Lord Buddha's teachings and lays the burden of the blame for any logical confusion on the later commentators. (Ibid, p 405)

According to this supreme monism of Abhinavagupta, absolute I-consciousness is the only entity that exists. It is infinite, eternal, perfect, and pure Consciousness which is endowed with divine creative power. This creative power is essentially vibrant in nature and is constantly involved in the manifestation of relative unity and all diversity. (The term 'relative unity' is used here because manifested unity has only relative oneness when compared to the absolute unity of infinite I-consciousness in which all creation is considered to be present and absolutely real.) A perfect yogin, established in parādvaita, sees one Absolute God in all diversity and unity. In this philosophy, diversity is not considered to be an illusion like 'the son of a barren woman,' but is as real as relative unity. Absolute reality itself shines in both the manifestations of relative unity and diversity. As Abhinavagupta says:

> "It is not being said that diversity does not exist at all in this (understanding of) non-dualism. The manifestation of diversity has been accepted even in that which is devoid of all differentiation" (MVV, I-108).

This divine creative power is the basic and essential

nature of monistic I-consciousness. Scholars sometimes refer to this godly essence as 'godhead,' however, it will be referred to as 'lordship' or 'divine essence' in this text. During their exploration of consciousness during deep states of meditation, Śaiva yogins discovered that this divine essence was infinitely blissful and playful as well as vibrant. Because of its divine and playful nature ancient philosophers called it God, and Śaivites called it Paramaśiva.

Creation, preservation, absorption, obscuration, and revelation are the five main acts in the divine play of the lordship of Paramaśiva. He creates, preserves and absorbs all phenomena. In the process, He conceals his real nature and appears as finite beings. He causes these beings to become increasingly identified with their limited individual egos. After undergoing births and deaths in innumerable species, He finally realizes his true nature as lordship, thus concluding His divine play. All this is the manifestation of His divine power, and is not in any way different from Him. Thus a finite being is not different from God Who is simply hiding in this form. In the words of Abhinavagupta:

> "But Almighty God, being able to do even the impossible, and possessing pure independence, is skilled in playfully concealing His real Self." (TĀ. IV. 10)

According to this absolute non-dualism of parādvaita, He and He alone exists in all the various scenes of this play. All creation has its real and eternal existence within God in the form of the divine potency of His pure consciousness. Once

creation becomes manifested as apparent phenomenal existence, it has a beginning and an end. Even so, perfect yogins see only the existence of one Absolute God in both the apparent phenomenal existence and the pure noumenal existence of absolute Consciousness. Śiva-yogins must not only know this truth, they have to actually feel it as well. Then and then alone do they attain perfect and complete Self-realization.

God is God in both His noumenal and phenomenal aspects. A poet is a poet even when he is in deep sleep. A supreme ruler though involved in mundane activities or quietly resting, is still a ruler. In a similar way God remains fully Himself, complete with his divine power even when He appears in His noumenal aspect. Therefore, it is due to His essential nature that he is God, not because of His relation with phenomenal existence. This is the main difference between the advaita approach of Śaṁkarāchārya and the parādvaita approach of Abhinavagupta.

God, while appearing as all phenomena, does not undergo any change or transformation - called pariṇāma by the post-Śaṅkara Vedāntins. According to Abhinavagupta, all phenomenal manifestations take place in the manner of a reflection. He teaches realism (satkāryavāda), but his realism is neither a material realism nor does it involve any process of pariṇāma. All of creation is merely an outward reflection of the divine powers of God. His powers shine in Him as "I" but their outward reflections appear as "this." This is the

secret of the reality of all phenomenon. In this way the satkāryavāda of Abhinavagupta can be considered a form of spiritual realism. All creation is the materialization of the divine will of God. It is a wonderful and divine transmutation brought about by God through His own free will.

There is nothing lacking in the playful nature of God, because he is paripūrna, not only full but overflowing. All the external manifestations of God's divine potency spill out from this blissful fullness. God projects His powers outward not because of any need, but because it is the basic nature of His infinite and divine potency to do so. A person might ask why this is God's nature, but it is useless to question or challenge the essential nature of a thing. It would be absurd to ask why fire is warm, or why it shines, or why it burns, and so on. Fire, devoid of such qualities, would, quite simply, cease to be fire. A piece of unlit charcoal is just a lump of charcoal and would never be mistaken for fire. Similarly God, devoid of the vibrant manifestation of His divine creative power, would be reduced to the position of an insentient entity. In the words of Abhinavagupta:

> "If Almighty God had remained forever in one form, He would have to give up His consciousness and creative power, thus becoming an insentient article like an earthen water vessel." (I. A. III 100, 101)

The manifestation of contradictory concepts like bondage and liberation, relative unity and diversity, ignorance and knowledge, etc., are simply parts of God's divine drama. Abhinavagupta says:

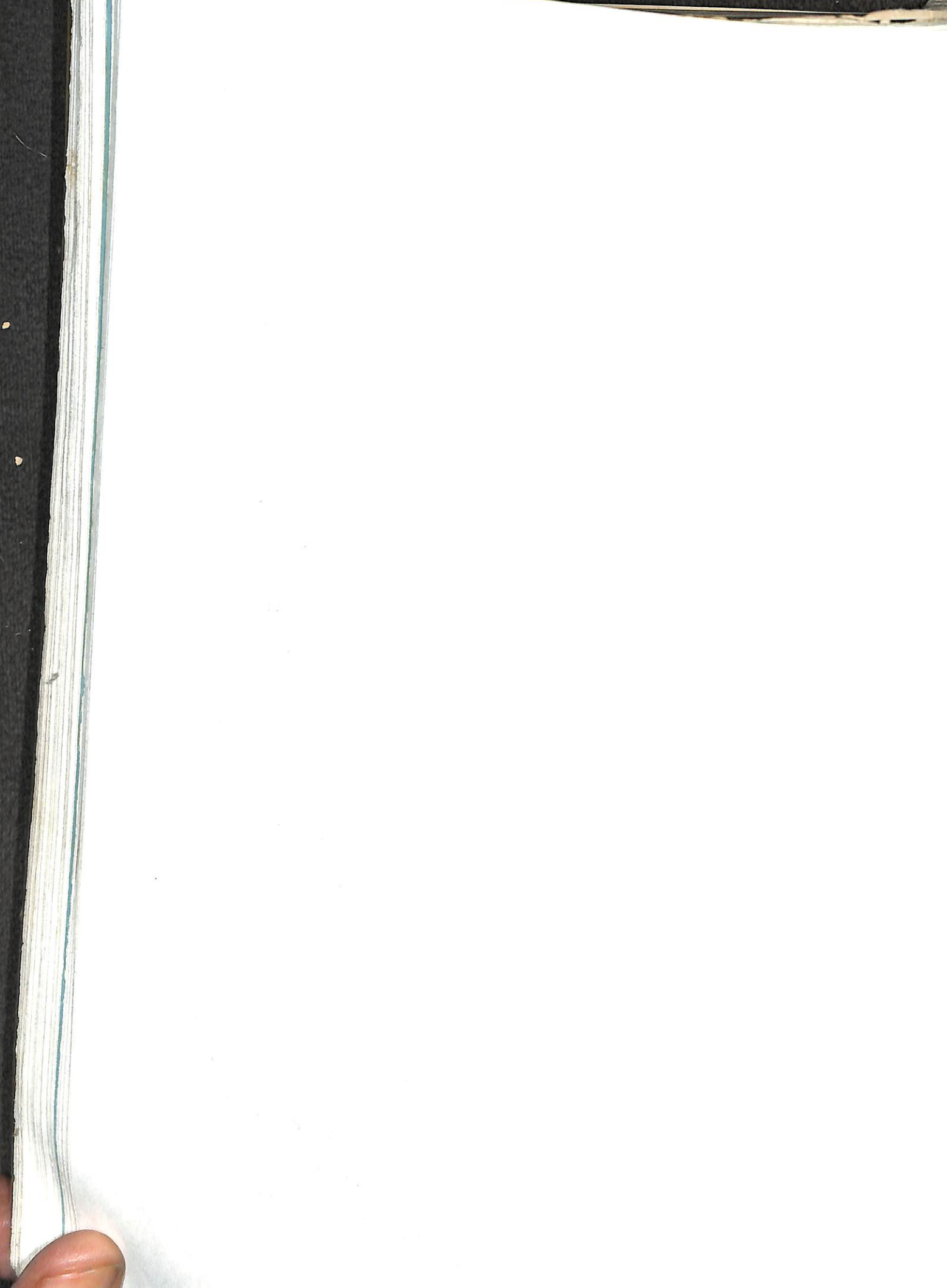
> "These twin concepts of bondage and liberation are the essential character of Almighty God, because, in fact, the concept of difference does not exist in him at all." (BPD. 14)

Another difference between the advaita and parādvaita approach is that while Advaitins can experience monism only in the state of samādhi, parādvaitins experience it even during mundane transactions. Because of this, Narasimha-gupta, the father of Abhinavagupta, called it pratyakṣādvaita, immediate (perceived) non-dualism. As Abhinavagupta says:

> "The great teacher, Narasimhagupta, having ripened his intellect in the art of correct contemplation, calls this the non-dualism that can be perceived through one's external senses." (MVV. I. 763).

Abhinavagupta uses a special type of logical reasoning which he calls sattarka. All prevalent logic (tarka) is based on those conventions which have evolved out of the mundane experiences of people working within the usual confines of the mind and emotions (māya). By contrast, sattarka is based on the intuitive experiences of yogins who transcend limited existence and experience reality at the plane of unity in diversity (vidyā).

Abhinavagupta teaches that an insentient object cannot prove or assert its existence through its own power, but requires the help of a sentient being to witness it and to say that it exists. This brings to mind Berkeley's famous dilemma of the tree falling in the forest. If no sentient being is present, does the tree falling make a noise? The Kashmir Saivites would say, "Yes. There is noise, because it all happens within Absolute Consciousness."



In this philosophy, sentience alone is said to have an independent existence. It proceeds to some insentient object, assumes its form, and appears as that object as well. The manifested insentient object itself is considered real. However, such an object is considered to be in a more real and pure form when it shines within the consciousness of some living being where that object can actually be said to exist. Finally, the insentient object is eternal and therefore absolutely real (paramārthasat) only within infinite Consciousness itself (see Chapter II for a further discussion of realism). Whether finite or infinite, it is consciousness alone which can appear as a knowing subject, as all the instrumental means of knowing, and as all known objects as well. This proves two things: (1) consciousness alone has an independent existence, and, (2) it alone shines as the whole phenomenal world.

This approach to the truth through the intuitive vision of unity in diversity (sattarka) clarifies the non-dualism of divinely potent Consciousness, and shows that this Consciousness has the power to assume the forms of unconscious entities and to shine in their forms as well. As Abhinavagupta says:

> "Therefore, only the atman (Self) shines (everywhere) taking as its form the whole objective existence known as the universe, and appearing as all this without any break.
>
> " The object, being itself of the nature of consciousness, is also wholly immersed in the light (of consciousness); since the ultimate truth is merely that the light (of consciousness) shines, what distinction could there be

between omniscience and its absence" (BH. I. 52). (I.P.V. BR. Vol. I - 6-52)

Abhinavagupta is showing here that the supposed difference between finite consciousness and the infinite one is commonly based on the phenomenal existence of the objects of consciousness such as the body, the senses, and the brain. However, because these objects owe their existence to and emerge out of consciousness itself, they can hardly be capable of forming sound judgments about that consciousness.

Instead of depending on conventional logic, this sattarka is based on the authority of intuitive experiences of supreme monism arrived at during the practice of yoga. These views and teachings of Abhinavagupta may initially be considered illogical by certain scholars of Western philosophy, but perhaps westerners should take a closer look at the essence of their own form of logic which depends solely on the mind and its ideation for its authority.

As we pointed out in the Introduction, there is an important difference between Indian darsana and western philosophy. Darśana is basically an intuitive realization of a fact, while books dealing with it are only darśanas in a secondary sense. In Indian philosophical systems, logic is used only in the writings of this secondary form of darśana in order to present and debate the truths gleaned during yogic experience. By contrast in the west, philosophy is basically a tradition of worldly wisdom and logic developed through ordinary intellectual abilities, and this use of the intellect

is essentially its only method.

Abhinavagupta explains the parādvaita principle of Kashmir Śhaivism at several places in his prominent works, and discusses it from several points of view. In his opinion, scriptural passages which express this principle do not need to employ the inclusive/exclusive implication method (bhāgatyāga-laksanā) as commentary or explanation. He says:

> "Just as students not acquainted with certain synonyms are taught as follows: 'A pādapa (tree) is a bhūruha, and a ghaṭa (pot) is a kumbha,' so it is said that the 'Almighty Lord is this whole phenomenon" (MVV.I.929).

By this he simply means that the "definition" of God does not add any new predicate about Him, but simply substitutes a synonym - like saying a "rug" is a "carpet."

Parādvaita neither accepts diversity nor rejects it totally. Though diversity is not an absolute reality, yet it has its roots in such a reality. Abhinavagupta says:

> "The absolute monism is that principle which neither refutes nor establishes diversity" (Ibid.I-123).

He asserts that no apparent diversity can in any way disturb the absolute unity of the Lord who shines brilliantly due to the blissful lustre of His pure Consciousness (Ibid I-621).

Adopting the view of supreme non-dualism, Abhinavagupta says that parādvaita is that principle wherein monism, dualism, and monodualism appear equally as the manifestations of one and the same divine reality:

> "The real non-dualism is that philosophical view which sees only one Truth in diverse statements like - 'This is diversity, this is non-diversity, (that is unity) and , this is both diversity and unity'" (MVV.I.626).

According to Abhinavagupta, a yogin who is established in the understanding and experience of supreme non-dualism, sees only one reality shining in all mutually opposite entities like pleasure and pain, bondage and liberation, sentience and insentience, and so on, just as an ordinary person sees both a ghata and a kumbha as only one thing (a pot) expressed through different words (TA 11-19).

Seeing through the lens of this supreme monism, Abhinavagupta says that the Lord can appear as anything and everything in the universe, because He enjoys full independence and is capable of bringing about even the impossible.

> "The Almighty Lord, is thus, by virtue of His perfect independence, capable of doing the impossible. In what form does He not, the master of all masters, appear?" (Ibid I-92)

Elucidating this principle still further, he says that the Lord shines Himself differently as 1) uncovered Truth, 2) disguised Truth, 3) and ~~hidden and~~ partly hidden truth (Ibid I-93).

Laying further emphasis on the absolute theistic nature of monistic reality, he asks:

> "Who can make the shallow water of a tank ~~overflow, the brim~~? It is (only a spring), full up to the brim, that can send off flowing streams (of water) on all sides." (I.P.V. I - 245, 246)

Emphasizing the principle of supreme non-dualism, he says that the single absolute Consciousness, being endowed with independent creative power, itself appears in wonderfully varied forms (Ibid, I-76). He adds that it is pure Consciousness alone which appears in the form of all different

phenomena (Ibid, I-86).

Aside from the differences with Advaita Vedānta discussed earlier, Abhinavagupta's principle of parādvaita should also not be confused with the bhedabheda or viśiṣṭādvaita principles of the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava schools of southern India for the following reasons:

(1) Paradvaita maintains an absolutist view in its metaphysics and ontology and this is not popular with Śuddhādvaitins like Vallabha, or with Viśiṣṭādvaitins like Rāmānuja, Śrīkaṇṭha, etc. Bhedābheda-vadins like Nimbārika, and Caitanya, along with the Śaiva-Siddhāntins, do not support absolutism either.

(2) According to Abhinavagupta, Paramaśiva is not some form of personal God living in a superior heavenly abode like Vaikuṇṭha, Goloka, Divya-vṛndāvana, or Rudraloka. All these abodes, along with their divine masters, are simply the playful creations of Paramaśiva. As we have already seen, He produces these abodes by means of the reflective manifestations of His divine powers. By definition these creations have a beginning and an end and only Paramasiva is eternal.

(3) The final liberation in the paradvaita view is a state of perfect and absolute unity far more profound than even the highest type of sāyujya, or sālokya - the forms of liberation known to these other schools.

(4) Creation by Paramaśiva involves no transformation

(parināma) either in God or in his creative energy (Śakti). It is instead a wonderful transmutation which causes no change whatsoever in the source.

(5) The parādvaita of Kashmir Śaivism does not accept any kind of svagata-bheda or interior variety of Paramaśiva that impairs his essential unity, the way that the Visistadvaitins, for example, see this variety in their ~~Absolute~~ eternal truth which, ~~whom~~ they call Nārāyana.

Only the parādvaita of Kashmir Śaivism can be accepted as the one true non-dualism because it sees only one absolute reality in all phenomenal and noumenal entities. It alone sees perfect unity even in mundane transactions. The mind of a parādvaitin becomes double-edged. It conducts worldly transactions through its outward edge and remains immersed in the absolute unity through its inward edge. Great royal sages like Janaka and Śrīkṛṣṇa are examples of yogins who have been described as established in parādvaita.

It might be argued that the pantheism of some western thinkers resembles the parādvaita of Kashmir Śaivism, but this theory falls apart because of the non-absolutist character of pantheism. These western thinkers do not see the existence of God beyond all phenomena. As we have seen, in the view of Abhinavagupta, all phenomena are merely the outward reflective manifestations of the Absolute. These phenomena rise and fall like waves on the ocean of perfectly pure, independently playful, and divinely potent pure Consciousness, the only

absolute and eternally existent reality.

This philosophy, which contains so many valuable and important principles, has remained more or less confined to the small valley of Kashmir. It is surprising that it never gained real popularity among great scholars in cities like Vārânasī. Only a few scholars from India's plains developed interest in parādvaita, but they tended to concentrate their interests on the works of later authors like Kṣemarāja and Bhāskarakaṇṭha, both of whom present defective versions of the philosophy. This has also been the problem with present century research scholars in the field. Most of them have followed these authors of secondary importance, which has resulted in various confusions and philosophical loop-holes.

Other scholars have started to see some of the important differences between the Vedāntic form of monism and the Śaivite non-dualism. Nevertheless, Vedānta remains the deep rooted faith of most of them, and this naturally influences their writings. Sanskrit scholars still spend much of their time and energy on the logic of Vyākaraṇa, Nyāya, and Vedānta, apparently not drawn to the Self-realization offered through the sattarka of Śaivism. Thus Śaivism has yet to find real acceptance in the academic institutions of Sanskrit learning, even in Vārāṇasi, the city of Śiva.

Chapter 2

Theistic Absolutism and Spiritual Realism

In this chapter we will examine theism and realism, two important principles of Kashmir Śaivism which are central to this philosophy and set it apart from other schools of thought. In India, both of these topics have been vociferously debated and written about for centuries. Some schools argue that creation's form is not real but an illusion, others deny the presence of divinity or a God, and still others try to establish the theory of a personal God living in a divine abode. The ancient authors of Kashmir Śaivism eloquently addressed these various arguments in an attempt to correct what they saw as misconceptions about Absolute Reality.

Theistic absolutism and realism are the basic ontological principles of Kashmir Śaivism. In this philosophy everything that exists is real, and is spiritual as well because it is the manifestation of an absolute reality which is described as pure, eternal, and infinite Consciousness. According to the ancient authors of this philosophy, the essential features of Consciousness are Its infinite, divine, and joyful vitality, and the inclination to manifest Its powers of creation, preservation, dissolution, obscuration, and revelation. This vibrant, creative quality is the divine essence of God. Consciousness is also described as luminous. It illuminates Itself and is always aware of Itself and everything within it.

The ancient masters refer to this One creative force out of which everything emerges in various ways. It is known most commonly as the Absolute, Absolute Reality, Consciousness, Paramaśiva, and God. Yet, according to Kashmir Śaivism, Paramaśiva cannot be fully described or clearly thought over because being infinite in nature He cannot be confined to any thinking or speaking ability. No speech can fully describe Him, no mind can correctly think about Him, and no understanding can perfectly understand Him. This is His absoluteness, and Kashmir Śaivism considers this absoluteness to be one of His key attributes. Because the Absolute cannot be fathomed with the intellect or through ordinary logical reasoning and philosophical speculation, the ancient masters relied on revelation (darśana) in deep yogic states to arrive at their understanding and truths of Reality. Working from the foundation of absolute non-dualism, they discovered Paramaśiva within their own consciousness; looking within they found the Whole. They were able to transcend the ordinary limited vision of the individual self, with a small "s", and discover the universal Self. Because this Self of each individual is none other than the Absolute, because God and the Self are one, this philosophy is truly theistic.

What is this Self, and how did the Śaiva philosophers of Kashmir experience It? They assert that the Self alone has absolute existence. This Self is within every human being, and in recognizing and experiencing it within ourselves, we are

actually at one with the divine. What is more, the Self exists within us at all times, whether or not we recognize and experience it. As living beings we are always aware of our own existence, and the experience of existing is always present in us. What is more, we never require the help of any aids in feeling our own existence. Even when we are in a state of deep, dreamless sleep and the senses, mind, and intellect are no longer functioning, the Self continues to experience itself as a witness to this state. Had the Self not existed as a witness during this time, how could we, upon awaking, recollect the void experienced in deep sleep? Thus the Self is always self-existent, self-evident, and self-conscious, and is itself its own proof.

These Śaiva philosophers, relying on their experiences of deep revelation (turyá) during meditation, assert that the Self is Consciousness, and that Consciousness is actually a kind of stirring. It is not physical or psychic in nature, but is described as a spiritual stir or urge. All living beings feel in themselves this urge that shines in the form of a will to know and to do, and so we are always inclined to be involved with knowing and doing. We can recognize this urge in all forms of life, even in a healthy newborn baby, or in a chick just hatched out of an egg.

We are all aware of our own individuality, and this knowing, the first urge, is itself an action, or something we do. Likewise, doing, the second urge, cannot occur without

knowing. Yet neither of them can be possible without willing.* Willing is a sort of extroverted stirring of the above mentioned natural and subtle urge of consciousness. [SD I-9,10,24,25].

This stirring appears as a vibrative volition known in Kashmir Saivism as spanda. It is neither a physical vibration like sound or light, nor mental movement like desire, disgust, or passion. Rather, it is the spiritual, movement-like activity of consciousness whose essential nature is a simultaneous outward and inward vibration. The inward and outward movements of spanda shine as subjective and objective awareness of I-ness and this-ness respectively. The inward stirring shines with the subject, the Self, the transcendental experience of the pure "I," while the outward stirring illuminates the object, the other, the immanent "that-ness" and "this-ness" of phenomena. Because of this double-edged nature of spanda, the pure Self is experienced in both its transcendental and immanent aspects by yogins immersed in the state of Self-revelation (turyā).

Beyond turyā, one can experience the state of Paramasiva, known as pure Consciousness (turyātīta). Paramasiva is the ultimate Self who is illuminated within us by the glowing awareness of His own pure consciousness. There He shines as "I" which transcends the concepts of both transcendence and immanence. It is "I" and "I" alone. It is the infinite and

*(This discussion is dealing with the triad of kriya, jnana, and iccha.)

absolutely perfect monistic "I" without any sense of "This-ness" at all. In Śaivism this "I" is called pure samvit, and it consists of that superior luminosity of pure Consciousness which is known as prakāśa and as its Self-awareness know as vimarśa. This "I" is not the egoistic "I". The egoistic "I" revolves around four aspects of our being: 1) deha, the gross physical body, 2) buddhi, the fine mental body, 3) prāṇa, the subtler life force, and 4) sunya, the still subtler finite and individual consciousness of the Self or void of dreamless sleep. But the "I", existing as samvit and samvit alone, is absolutely pure potential, and is the real Self of every living being.

The essential nature of samvit is the subtle stir of spanda. The introverted and extroverted movements of spanda cause samvit to manifest itself in both the noumenal and phenomenal aspects of creation. These two aspects of samvit are known in Śaivism as Śiva (transcendent) and Śakti (universal). Śiva and Śakti are the two names given to the monistic Absolute (Paramaśiva) when it is being considered in its dual aspects of eternal and transcendent changelessness (Śiva), and the ever-changing and immanent manifestation of universal appearances (Śakti).

This theistic absolutism is significantly different from similar approaches in other Indian philosophies. Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, for example, is a theistic philosophy, but it is pluralistic in view, while Kashmir Śaivism posits an absolute

non-dualism. Vijñánavàda does not accept the principle of theism at all. Advaita-Vedänta accepts the apparent (prätibhäsika) existence of mäyä in addition to the real existence of Brahman thus creating another variety of dualism. Kashmir Śaivism asserts that mäyä is not separate in any way, but is simply an essential divine power of Absolute Brahman.

The Vaiṣṇavas differ in their approach as well. They postulate a theory of a personal God, living in a divine abode, ruling like a supreme monarch over all heavenly and worldly beings while elevating His devotees to the position of citizens of His divine domain. According to Kashmir Śaivism, such a God is actually just one of many superior deities which rule at various levels (tattvas) and are part of the infinite outward manifestation of the Absolute. There is another important point of difference between these two approaches. Vaiṣṇavas say that the universe is the transformation of the divine power of God who remains unchanged Himself, while Kashmir Śaivism maintains that God and His divine power are actually one entity, not two. Śaivas say that Śiva and Śakti are just two names given to the transcendent and immanent aspects of the monistic Absolute, so that a change or transformation of Śakti, as proposed by the Vaiṣṇavites, would automatically mean an identical transformation of Śiva.

A similar difference occurs with pantheistic schools of the West. While both Śaivas and pantheists see God in each and every phenomenon, Śaivas teach that God is the transcendental

reality as well. Pantheists view God as being continually transformed into phenomenal existence, while Śaivism does not accept the notion that God is transformed in any way. Because of its avoidance of absolutism, pantheism is actually more closely aligned with Vaiṣṇavism than with Śaivism. However, if you could join pantheism and absolutism into one principle, the resulting combination would come closer to the theistic absolutism of Kashmir Śaivism.

As we have shown, this philosophy posits a transcendental Absolute that is theistic in nature. This Absolute is not some separate divine source, but is identical with the Self of every being. Nor is It just some inert, Self-absorbed form of Consciousness. It is vibrant, luminous, Self-aware, and above all creative.

In order to better understand the spiritual realism of this philosophy, let us now examine the creative aspect of Consciousness and how the Absolute manifests this world. In Kashmir Śaivism, the theory of reflection is used to explain the creation of the universe. The great sages of this tradition explain that all phenomenon, including all objective, subjective, and instrumental entities*, are actually reflections of the divine powers of God shining inside His spiritually luminous, infinite Consciousness. These sages compare this creative reflecting process to what goes on in a mirror. They show how God is like a mirror in that reflections

* Reference is to pramātr (subject), prameya (object), and pramāṇa (the act of cognition).

shining in him do not transform him in any way. A mirror, bearing infinite numbers of reflections, still remains a mirror and does not undergo any change or transformation because of what is reflected therein. God, bearing the whole psycho-physical existence as reflections, is also not involved in any transformation of his essence. He remains pure consciousness alone while appearing as infinite phenomena. The whole universe exists in the transcendental aspect of God, shining there as infinite, pure, and blissful I-Consciousness. It shines within Him as Him alone, and not as anything other than Him, not even as parts of a whole as Rāmānuja described it. The Universe exists in Him as pure consciousness alone, just as all milk products are present in milk in the form of milk alone. All that is, shines within Him as "I" alone. In Him there is no trace of "this-ness" or "that-ness." Rather, it is the outward reflections of his divine powers that appear as "this-ness." This is evident in the Sanskrit word for reflection, pratibimba. The prefix "prati" denotes something as "pratīpa," or of opposite character. As "I-ness" is the basic character of the divine powers of God, then their reflections do not appear as "I" but as "this."

However, this mirror metaphor is not completely satisfactory as it does not apply in another aspect of this reflection theory. A mirror is unconscious and therefore is unaware of its own existence and of the reflections shining in it. Also, it cannot independently cause various reflections to

shine in itself, but depends on outer objects to come within its reflecting range. God, being total consciousness, is at all times both aware of Himself, and of the reflections shining within Him. Being absolutely independent and free, He is able to create infinite reflections on His own, and does not require any external agent to help manifest the reflections. He does not require any help from the so called prātibhāsika māyā of the Advaita Vedānta, or the vāsanā of the Vijñāna-vāda school. He bears within Himself the reflections of His own divine powers and these appear as the tattvas from Sadāśiva to Prithvī (see Chapter 7). These tattvas include everything in the world, and all of it is nothing other than the outward reflection of the divine essence of God.

Having explained the reflective process of creation, it is important to clarify that there are stages to creation, and levels of reality to each one. Initially, before the creation process even begins, everything that will exist shines as pure "I" within Paramaśiva. This is known as the stage of Śakti. At this stage all things are at their finest and purest, and are considered by the philosophy to be absolutely real (paramarthasat).

While all of creation exists in Paramaśiva, it does not shine there in its phenomenal form. Rather, it exists there as the divine potency of Paramaśiva and shines as pure consciousness of a totally monistic character. Just as a whole plant exists in a seed in the form of the seed alone, so does

all creation exist as samvit - the divine potency within Paramaśiva. A seed is a seed by virtue of its capacity and potentiality to appear in the form of a plant. Thus a plant lies in its seed in the form of the potency of the seed. Similarly, all phenomena lie in Paramaśiva in the form of His divine potency. How could a plant sprout out of a seed if all of its parts were not already existent in that seed? In the same way, the whole universe has an eternal existence within the infinite samvit of Paramaśiva (existing there as His Śakti) because He has the power and potential to appear in the form of all phenomena. [S.D. III-2,3].

The unmanifested existence of all phenomena starts to appear as real objects at the initial step of phenomenal evolution. As we have explained, this creation is brought about by Paramaśiva through His divine essence (lordship) in the manner of a reflection.* At that initial stage of manifestation the phenomena shine faintly inside the luster of pure I-consciousness and appear there as a faintly shining "this-ness." This is just like the sprouting state of a seed. Both the seed and the sprout appear there, but both appear as one inseparable whole. That is the state of 'unity in diversity' in which all phenomenal existence is a reality and is not some illusion like the well known example of 'the son of

* This outward manifestation of the inwardly existent phenomenon is called kalanā in Śaivism, while imagination is called kalpanā. Kalpanā is the result of mental agitation, while kalanā is just an objective manifestation of a thing which is already existent within the subject, and by having identity with the subject, shines there in the form of I-ness.

a barren woman.' This is the stage known as vidyā. All objects are still considered real at this stage, but they are considered less refined as they begin to take on physical or mental density.

The stirring of spanda, which is also operating at the stage of vidyā, next appears outwardly as the third stage known as māyā. This is the stage of clear and distinct manifestation of diversity in which I-ness and this-ness shine as two different entities. According to Kashmir Śaivism, phenomena at this level are also real, and in their most dense form.*

Many schools of philosophy have misunderstood the nature of māyā in various ways. The manifestation of objective existence at the stage of māyā is neither based on the imagination of any finite being nor on any flux of mind as conceived by idealistic thinkers of other philosophical schools. It is not a dream based on one's imagination. Imagination functions through our mental apparatus. But the basic objective existence of undiversified this-ness becomes manifest only through the outward stir of the spanda of absolute Consciousness, shining first at the stage of vidyā and then reflecting outward its inner divine powers as the stage of māyā. All this occurs without any kind of mental functioning.

*(Dualistic philosophies often refer to māyā and its evolutes as "impure," or "illusionary." Kashmir Śaivism insists that all things simply evolve from their subtle and absolutely real form as potential or spirit, into the density of the still real physical level.)

Paramaśiva, through His divine will, manifests the play of descent from the stage of śakti to those of vidyā and māyā. In the second part of this play, He manifests an ascension from the stage of māyā to those of viydā and śakti. He appears to be always descending and ascending in countless forms through these stages of existence. But, because all this play is manifested by Him as a reflection, He does not diverge in the least from His state of changeless Absolute existence shining as pure, infinite, and potent I-consciousness. His divine powers become reflected outwardly as objects which are actually inside the pure luster of His absolute Consciousness.

All existence appears as the manifestation of the stages of vidyā and māyā, along with the infinite variety of subjects and objects shining therein. Paramaśiva just wills to appear as finite phenomena and appears like that. For example, He loses himself by appearing as a person unaware of His own divinity. Then, when He wills to recognize His real nature, that same person recollects their divine character and absolute identity with God. This is the play of God losing and finding His own treasure.

The whole of creation, all beings, and all means of knowing and doing are nothing but the materialized will of the Absolute God. It is basically not the creation of any individual or universal mind because its manifestation starts long before the process of any mental functioning. The existence of all phenomena is therefore not idealistic or

dreamlike in character. It is absolutely real at the stage of śakti where it shines as Absolute subjective consciousness. It is real at the stage of vidyā where it appears as the objective form of infinite consciousness. Then it is still real at the stage of māyā where it shines in its objective reality. If all this phenomena were not real, it would not have any lasting results, and beings would not find it desirable. What is more, phenomenal existence serves as a common and universal target of the activities of all beings, whereas phenomena existing in dreams, etc. are absolutely individualistic in their character. The universal utility of a phenomenon is the proof of its reality.

Those philosophical thinkers, who propagate idealism and say that the world is unreal like a dream or mental hallucination, very often deceive themselves and many others as well. An unfortunate side effect of this non-existentialist view-point has been a recent dark period in Indian history which has resulted in the callous mistreatment of whole groups of people, poverty, misrule, and many other miseries. So long as we live in māyā, we have to understand that all its multifarious varieties are real, otherwise we shall be deceiving ourselves and possibly harming others.

In Śaivism, only certain concepts like 'horns of a hare','son of a barren woman,' 'flowers in the sky,' etc. are considered to be unreal in the mundane activities of day to day life because these things don't actually exist or serve any

practical purpose. However, such things may be accepted as real in poetic imagination where they can be artistically used.

In Śaivism, the physical universe is not considered to be paramārthasat, or absolutely real (the way it is in the sakti stage), because it is merely a manifestation shining as a reflection. It is a created reality which will eventually come to an end. At the individual level, we do not have any dealings with physical objects residing outside the luster of our individual consciousness. We can interact with objects only while they shine inside our knowledge, and our knowledge is a manifested form of our consciousness. Objects are a reflection of our knowing power (jñāna-śakti), appearing inside the mirror of our understanding sense. Objects shine there in the form of ideas made up of word-images known as vikalpa-jñāna. Ideas, or ideation, is formed by us with the help of our mind and understanding, and only this ideation can clearly illuminate an object. In other words, our conceptual and determinate knowledge is encompassed by the field of ideation alone.* Through our ideation arises all names and forms which provide us with the knowledge of an object. All clear and definite knowledge of an object is therefore based on ideation, and all mundane transactions are conducted with the help of ideation formed by us in accordance with conventional traditions regarding the relation between words and their meanings.

*(Knowledge without ideation is called nirvikalpa, which does not clarify either the name or the form of any object.)

Ideation is thus the basis of all definite mundane knowledge. The whole of phenomenal existence shines in this vikalpa knowledge. The existence of phenomena outside this knowledge cannot be proved because even if it is inferred to exist outside ideation, such inferential knowledge itself consists of ideation.

Vikalpa-buddhi or samvṛti are the two terms used to convey the concept of ideation. The latter term is more popular in Buddhist philosophy. As the existence of all phenomena is based on samvṛti, it is known as samvṛti-satya, or truth (satya) based on mental ideation. This is one kind of truth. The other is known as paramārtha-satya or absolute truth. Abhinavagupta asserted the validity of both these forms of truth when he said:

> "Samvṛti is the name given to mental ideation (accompanied by a word image). The phenomenon can, no doubt, be said to be a reality based on such ideation; it is indeed a reality of a specific kind (and is not falsehood)" (I.Pr.V.II.2-3).

Utpaladeva asserts that all phenomena are real both inwardly in pure I-consciousness, and outwardly in the field of māyā. About this he says:

> "All the apparent entities, having consciousness as their basic character, exist eternally only within (infinite) consciousness. At the same time, having an outward manifestation through māyā, these entities exist as well in outer phenomenon" (I.Pr.I.VIII.7).

All phenomena truly exist in pure and absolute Consciousness alone. The existence of phenomenon in māyā is simply due to manifestation, or ābhāsa. According to Śaivism, all phenomena

are simply ābhāsas, or manifestations. What is more, as discussed above, ideation is the basis of all our knowledge of the phenomenal world, and as ideation itself appears in the form of all objects, it is itself a sort of manifestation or ābhāsa.

Ideation as a manifestation is known as abhāsa-vāda in Kashmir Śaivism, and could perhaps be rendered by the Western term "phenomenology." This concept is sometimes taken by scholars as a form of idealism, but these scholars have failed to take into account the above mentioned views of the great authors of Śaivism. Objective entities, though consisting of manifestation and ideation, are in fact real because of their utility, their constant existence in the past, present, and future, and their being the common targets of the knowledge and action of all beings. As Utpaladeva asserts,

> "Ideas like action, relation, universals, substance, directions (in space), time, etc., do have a real existence due to their continuity and utility and are based on the concept of unity in diversity" (I.Pr.II.ii.1).

All the tattvas from sadāśiva to earth are ābhāsas and are not to be considered false like 'the sons of barren women.' They are in fact real according to the pragmatic view of Kashmir Śaivism. Being always existent inside absolute Reality, and shining there in the form of pure I-consciousness, they cannot be considered unreal. Their existence within Paramaśiva in the form of His divine potency is their absolute reality. It is only their objective manifestation which is a

creation and which has a beginning and an end. But even then this empirical reality, though it is a truth based on mental ideation (samvṛti-satya), is nevertheless still a reality according to Abhinavagupta [I.Pr.V.II.ii.3].

The absolute reality of all phenomena is considered a spiritual reality as well because all things have eternal existence within the divine potency of Paramaśiva. Since the stages of vidyā and māyā are the extroverted reflections of śakti, and since śakti is an absolute reality, all phenomena are to be taken as real by us who also appear in the field of such ābhāsas. In summary, even though the universe is manifested in three different levels of reality, it is real at all the three stages of śakti, vidyā, and māyā, and this realism is referred to in the Śaiva monism of Kashmir as 'spiritual realism.'

This realism is quite different from that of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya-yoga, and from Buddhist realism (Sarvāstivāda). Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika posits a theory in which all matter in the form of atoms is to be accepted as an eternally real substance existing outside the knowing subject, its I-ness, and its understanding. This is a type of gross materialistic realism with which Kashmir Śaivism does not agree. Śaivism insists that even atoms do not exist outside the light of consciousness and, like other created elements, are just an outward manifestation of the Absolute.

Sāṃkhya-yoga teaches a comparatively subtle form of

material realism. Mūla-prakṛti, or undiversified objective existence, containing the whole universal existence in an unmanifested form, is considered to be an eternally existent reality by this philosophy. It is basically a subtle substance that takes on the forms of all the instrumental and objective elements that constitute the universe. Kashmir Śaivism accepts both the principles of atoms and mūla-prakṛti, but does not consider them to be realities existing separately from I-consciousness. Rather, it teaches a theory in which both such entities are said to be merely outward manifestations of the divine power of the Absolute I-consciousness, appearing as ābhāsas at different stages of Its Self-extroverted divine play.

The Sautrāntika and Vaibhāṣika schools of Buddhism posit a theory of two independent realities flowing concurrently. These realities are: (1) Ever-changing currents of momentary consciousness (vijñāna) appearing as mind (citta), and (2) currents of momentary matter becoming evident in the light of vijñāna. The mind goes on appearing moment by moment in its different states, and matter flows on in the form of momentary material entities. Both of them flow independently yet go on cooperating with each other. The idealists (Vijñānavādins) refute the theory of the separate existence of mind and matter. According to them, material existence is simply an outward manifestation of ideas caused by past mental impressions which then appear like dreams.

Kashmir Śaivism agrees with Vijñānavādins in refuting bāhyārtha-vāda, the theory that matter has a real existence outside and independent of consciousness. But unlike Vijñāna-vāda it does not hold that material existence is like a dream. As already discussed, Kashmir Śaivism posits a theory called ābhāsavāda, the theory of manifestation. Accordingly, all phenomena are seen as ābhāsas or the reflections of the Absolute's divine powers, brought about by Its free and joyfully creative will known as the divine essence. A reflection cannot be said to be non-existent. It is therefore a reality -not an absolute reality (paramārthasat), but a mere manifestation or ābhāsa.

The universal reflection is not the reflection of the mental ideas of any being because the universe at its earliest stages of growth is basically the manifestation of the powers of pure I-consciousness shining at a stage that precedes the manifestation of any mind or mental apparatus. The absolute I-consciousness, being charged with the stir of spanda, manifests simple this-ness at the stage of vidyā. Then in māyā, the next stage of the play of extroversion, this-ness appears as an entity different from I-ness. Māyā, being goaded and directed by Lord Anantanātha (See chapter 4) expands itself into the tattvas of limitation (the five kañchukas), with which the infinite I-consciousness is reduced to utter finitude. This I-consciousness then appears as the puruṣa of the Sāṃkhya philosophy and His limited objective element of 'this-ness'

starts to shine in the form of prakrti, the cosmic energy. That energy, being goaded and directed by Lord Śrīkaṇṭhanātha (see chapter 4), undergoes change (pariṇāma) and becomes transformed into the instrumental and objective tattvas, including mind. Nothing in this process is created and nothing is destroyed. Everything becomes manifested through an evolutionary transformation of the basic insentient tattva called mūla-prakṛti and everything becomes dissolved into it again through an involutionary transformation.

These are the principles of Sāṃkhya realism that have been accepted in Kashmir Śaivism with the following clarifications: 1) Mūla-prakrti is directed and driven to this two faceted transformation by Śrīkaṇṭhanatha; 2) both puruṣa and prakrti are two tattvas of creation manifested in this form by Lord Anantanátha; 3) the basic creation of 'this-ness' is the objective manifestation of the divine creative power of the absolute I-consciousness (Śakti), in the process of its extroverted play.

Objective existence is thus a reality at all levels from pure Śakti to the most gross objective phenomena in the universe. The same phenomena which appear objectively in the universe are already existent in pure and absolute Consciousness in the form of its divine spiritual power called Śakti. This spiritual realism is a hallmark of the non-dualistic Śaivism of Kashmir. It can be considered pantheistic in outlook because a perfect Śivayogin sees God and

God alone in each and every phenomena. But, as we have shown, Kashmir Śaivism is also considerably different from the pantheism of the West. Firstly, the Śivayogin sees God as that absolute Consciousness which transcends all phenomenal existence, while pantheists do not agree with this principle of absolutism. Secondly, the Śivayogin does not accept the concept of any transformation of God into phenomenon, understanding the process to be a mere reflective manifestation of His divine powers, while pantheists believe that God actually becomes the phenomenal universe and is to be realized as such. Vaiṣṇava pantheists believe in a personal God who lives in a divine abode, but Śaiva monism asserts that such a God is only a deity created by Paramaśiva.

As we have shown, Śaiva monism proclaims that God is actually one absolute I-consciousness which contains all of creation in the form of His divine essence or lordship. This creation is real and all of it is infused with that one Consciousness. Although these theories of realism and theism may not be entirely compatible with modern Western philosophy, and though the methods for establishing them may not be familiar to the Western reader, nevertheless for many centuries these points have been well documented and tested by Śaiva yogins who experienced revelations of the truth (darśana) during the practice of yoga.

CHAPTER 3

FOUR STATES OF ANIMATION

In Indian Philosophy life functions such as breathing are known as prāna or animation. Entities which possess animation are known as prāṇins or living beings, and substances lacking the function of animation are considered to be inanimate.

However, certain entities, which are basically inanimate in character, appear to be animate and to conduct the functions of animation for living beings because these conscious beings identify them as being part of themselves. An example of an inanimate entity which appears animated in this way is the physical body and its various systems, limbs, organs and senses, all of which serve as the seats of different powers of animation. According to Indian philosophy, all of these material substances are in and of themselves inanimate, but the power of animation is extended to them by an individual's I-consciousness which takes them as its own self. Actually, it is the animate beings who conduct all the functions of animation and use these inanimate entities as their instruments. Being used and pervaded by sentient beings, these inanimate substances merely behave and appear animate.

Animation is that life-force which interacts most closely with consciousness and is the means by which consciousness conducts its activities of knowing and doing in all levels of animate beings. Animation functions in all seven types of beings from sakala, a worldly or heavenly soul bound in all the

three types of bondage*, to akala, the pure being absolutely free from all bondage (See Chapter 4 for a discussion of these levels of beings). The function of animation appears in five aspects known as the five prāṇas in Indian Philosophy. These are known as: prāṇa, apāna, samāna, udāna, and vyāna. These five functions of animation appear in four different states of animation known as: (1) jāgrat, the waking state (2) svapna, the dreaming state (3) suṣupti, the deep sleeping state and (4) turyā, the state of Self-revelation. The manifestation of these four states of animation rises and falls within infinite consciousness, the source of all the functions of prāṇa. This consciousness, though generally not counted among the states of animation, is sometimes considered to be the fifth state known as (5) turyātīta. Pure consciousness is understood to transcend the fourth state of animation.

There has been some confusion among philosophers about the distinction between turya and turyatita. The fourth state of animation should be referred to as the Self-revealing state of animation, but is very often mistakenly described as transcendental animation. Only turyatita should be called transcendental because the word atita means a reality that transcends something. Since it transcends even turya, the fourth state of animation, it is correct to consider it the transcendental state. To call turyatita a pure state is not sufficient, because purity is the nature of turya as well.

* (Ānava, māyīya, and kārma malas. See Chapter V)

In the first state of animation, known as the waking state (jāgrat), our bodies and senses are physically active and primarily focused on interacting with the exterior environment. To put it another way, we use our body with its various organs, the senses, and the breath as instruments for the assimilation and elimination of objects available in the world around us. While awake, we take in and eliminate food. We assimilate sounds through our ears and eliminate them through our mouths. This exchange process actually goes on with all the organs and senses, including the inner systems of the body. In Indian philosophy, the eliminating function is called prāṇa and the assimilating one is called apāna. Since these two functions of animation are constantly operating in the activity of breathing, the out-going breath is known as prāṇa and the in-coming breath is called apāna.

In Kashmir Saivism these terms do not just refer to exhalation and inhalation but are used to describe a broad range of concepts. All elimination of interior or exterior entities is considered to be prāṇa and all assimilation is thought of as apāna. The process of assimilating or gathering one's thoughts into speech is thus apāna, while the process of speaking is a form of elimination or diffusion (prāṇa). The mind taking hold of an idea is apāna, while letting go of the idea is prāṇa. Therefore these two functions of animation work through both our physical and mental organs.

The inner states of animation, dreaming (svapna),

sleeping (suṣupti), and Self-revelation (turyā), can also be present during the waking state. For example, we may have a sudden flash of Self-realization (turyā) while experiencing some powerful emotion in the waking existence, but for most people this amounts to a transitory peak experience, and our waking existence with its orientation fixed primarily on the external world remains dominant. We may get temporarily lost in day dreams and other internal states, but these come and go while our waking existence remains constant. While in the waking state we are usually not satisfied by merely thinking about objects like food and drink. We are satisfied only when we actually eat, drink, and taste physical objects.

In summary, the process of elimination and assimilation, working through the instruments of our physical and mental organs and interacting with the world around us, is called jagrat, the waking state of animation. The outer material world, in which all beings interact and work, is known as waking existence. This is the outermost form of existence while jagrat is the outermost state of animation. Throughout our lives we exist in and interact with reality while in the waking state.

The second state of animation is known as the dreaming state (svapna). In this state interaction with the exterior environment is reduced to a more subtle level. Obviously we continue to breath, and the mental functions of objective elimination and assimilation go on in our dreams as well.

However, this process goes on without any cooperation from our exterior senses or the organs of action (karmendriyas). For this reason Śaivism considers all states like deep thought, imagination, fancy, dhyāna, dhāraṇā, and savikalpa samādhi (samadhi with thoughts) to be forms of dreaming (svapna) that may arise during our waking hours. In other words, the dreaming state is not limited to those hours when we are actually lying down and sleeping.

Even though we live through our dreaming existence solely with the help of our interior senses and organs, because of a kind of delusion based on deep impressions of our activities in the waking state, we experience our dreams as if we were conducting these purely mental activities through our exterior senses and organs. This incorrect impression is a result of our mind, but while dreaming we are not able to understand it this way. We imagine that we are awake and living through these dream experiences in our gross physical body in the waking state. All of these activities like thinking, and imagining, which we ordinarily associate with the waking state, but which are here being conducted solely by the interior senses and organs, are considered by Śaivism to be part of the dreaming state of animation.

It is interesting that when we experience these activities in a dream we are momentarily satisfied even though the objects of assimilation and elimination are only imaginary. This does not happen in the waking state. Because of this process,

people can have the experience of pleasure, pain, wonder, satisfaction, and so on, even through their activities in dreams. Yogins can also attain higher spiritual states through a form of conscious "dreaming", because techniques of concentration like dhyāna are very much like dreams in a waking state. The practice of śāktopāya, which results in an exalted type of Self-realization, is also a practice in a form of conscious dreaming. All this illustrates how powerful dreaming animation can be even in the waking existence.

According to Indian philosophy there is an independent dream existence as well in which living beings function solely through their subtle bodies. They conduct both the activities of elimination and assimilation by simply thinking about them. All the abodes of forefathers, gods, super gods, and so on, are believed to belong to this dream existence. Unlike our dream world, their existence in this independent dream state is neither short-lived nor individual in character. This dream existence is created by the superior and highly powerful ideation of some super god like Brahmā, a god who consists of universal consciousness, who pervades all the individuals of that existence, and who directs, guides, and controls them from within. Their age is millions of times longer than the age of our phenomenal gross existence. The lives of beings residing in these dream-worlds are so long that they appear immortal to those of us living in this ordinary mortal state. Our waking existence is physical and gross in its character while the

dream existence of gods is mental and subtle in character. Yet these dream-worlds constantly serve as a common phenomenal reality to the beings living in them.

Compared to our physical existence, this dream existence is an ideal one. We offer oblations, sacrifices, prayers, praise, and devotional respect to the beings of this ideal existence. They in turn get satisfaction merely from the idea of having been offered such faithfully delivered oblations. This is the secret behind all religious activities like śrādha (post-funeral rites to the departed soul), and homa (fire-oblation).

Having been created by super gods, these dream worlds actually serve as real abodes to beings living in them through the long aeons of our worldly existence. Though this existence also comes to an end in the dissolutions that are conducted from time to time by superior rudras, in comparison to waking existence, it is considered in Indian philosophy to be immortal in character.

Our bodies, senses, and organs are gross in character, but these same instruments of the functions of animation are essentially subtle and mental in beings who inhabit the dream worlds. Our gross bodies are called sthūla-śarīra's, while these dream-world beings work with the help of liṅga-śarīras or subtle bodies. We conduct the functions of animation through both of these bodies which become coalesced through the mind. By contrast, beings in the independent dream worlds do not have

gross bodies, though for various purposes and occasions they are capable of assuming any bodily form. It is because of this that ordinary people will sometimes experience visions of these dream-world bodies.

There are many practices in the religions of the world which can lead aspirants into various forms of a subtle dream-like existence where they can experience liberation from worldly miseries and attain the pleasures they desire. The beings living in these independent dream-worlds are vastly more capable than we are of attaining bhoga (enjoyment) and moksa (liberation). But because even they are bound by the law of restriction known as niyati, the attainment of this dream existence is not considered the most desirable goal of life.

The third state of animation is called susupti, the state of deep sleep. It is often compared to dreamless sleep. All apparent functions of prāna and apāna stop in this state as the instrumental elements (see glossary) cease the elimination and assimilation of physical and mental objects. Individual I-consciousness shines in the void of deep sleep (susupti) as the only existent entity, freed from all passions, desires, pleasures, pain, hunger, thirst, etc. While this state brings about a temporary relief from misery, all the impressions of unhappiness remain with a person in an inactive and unmanifested state. In the terminology of modern psychology, these miseries are present in the subconscious mind of a person.

Another aspect of the deep sleep state is that the activities of elimination and assimilation are reduced equally to one tranquil, individual consciousness of the Self. The function of animation which arises in deep sleep is called samāna. This term expresses the equality of prāna and apāna. Samāna is the unified state of these two functions of animation into which they both become absorbed and out of which they both emerge over and over again. It is thus equally the resting point of both prana and apana. Besides, being free from all mutually opposite phenomena like pleasure, pain, liking, disliking, attachment, aversion, and so on, deep sleep is a state of perfect peace and rest because it is free from all mental and physical turbulence. The rest experienced in deep sleep increases the powers of both prāna and apāna by allowing fresh energy to enter all the organs, senses, nerves, the mind, and all the systems of one's body. When practicing a form of yoga which leads to deep sleep, we may experience amazing increases in both our physical and mental capacities as well as a diminishing of psychophysical fatigue and mental tension. It is because of these features of yoga that Transcendental Meditation became popular with people in the west who were suffering from tension and fatigue. Since this function of animation increases the energies of one's body and mind it is called samāna because it results in samunnayana or augmentation in the energy of living beings.

States that result in swooning and senselessness are also

considered to be different types of deep sleep (suṣupti). While deep sleep is very often simply the result of fatigue, various forms of it may also be caused by illness or the use of drugs. The blissfulness of all these types of deep sleep is considered to be negative in character because it is only a temporary relief from life's turmoil.

In [5] some cases, a higher form of blissfulness can be experienced by yogins who have learned to stop the functions of their mind, senses, and certain organs. In this form of deep sleep an intuitive realization of pure consciousness is experienced, though it remains finite in character.

According to Saivism, the yoga system of Patanjali leads to this kind of dreamless sleep even while one is awake. This is a form of deep sleep brought about by one's own will. Individual Self-consciousness alone remains shining in this yoga system's highest type of samādhi. However, this practice does not result in the realization of universal consciousness. Though practitioners may experience relief from worldly misery, they do not realize the potency of their divine essence. It is because of these limitations that Patañjali defines Īśvara or God as just an ever pure and ever-liberated soul who has been the preceptor of ancient yoga teachers like Kapila. Also, in Patañjali's Yogasūtra, God is not thought of as the creator or maintainer of the universe because this practice of deep sleep (suṣupti) cannot lead to the realization of divinity in this way.

According to Kashmir Śaivism there are two types of deep sleep. In one, a person will experience some faint objective feelings of heaviness, or lightness, etc. In the other type of susupti there is no objective feeling at all. These two forms of the sleeping state of animation are know as savedya and apvedya susupti respectively. The state of apavarga and kaivalya, as described in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Sāṁkhya-Yoga schools respectively, are examples of two types of savedya susupti. The state of nirvāna as described by the Vijñānavāda and Śūnyavàda schools are two types of apavedya susupti.

Each of these four states of animation, waking, sleeping, deep sleep, and Self-realization, can be analyzed and more finely ordered into several substates. Śaivism has worked out at least four varieties or substates of each of the four main states of animation. The states of apavaraga and kaivalya, along with both types of nirvāna mentioned above, are examples of four substates of deep sleep. The schools of thought mentioned above consider these states to be liberation (mukti), the highest goal of life. But Kashmir Śaivism does not consider these states to be liberation. According to Śaivism, beings who exist in all these types of susupti are pralayākalas whose state of animation is equalized breath (samāna). According to Kashmir Śaivism Indian philosophy, they remain asleep for a whole aeon which is equal to an age of phenomenal existence (this refers to a kalpa, approximately several billion years). At the close of this age, all phenomenal elements become absorbed

by stages into pure cosmic energy (mūla-prakrti). This is the stage of dissolution which is intermediate between two cycles of creation (avāntara pralya). This dissolution stage lasts as long as the age of phenomenal existence. At the end of the age of dissolution, the cosmic energy is shaken up by Lord Śrikaṇṭha Śiva, and a fresh creation of the instrumental and objective elements of the Sāṃkhya philosophy starts over again. Pralayākalas remain in a state of deep sleep until the beginning of this fresh creation, at which point they wake up. Lord Śrīkaṇṭha bestows his grace on some of the pralayākalas by placing them above māya in the plain of pure vidyā where they proceed gradually towards final liberation. The others proceed through the various courses of births and deaths in transmigratory existence according to the state of karma they had attained before reaching pralayākalahood.

Śaivism warns its practitioners about getting caught in this sleeping state of animation because it can cause a delay of nearly two aeons in one's spiritual evolution - this delay being caused by the huge span of time covered in the current creation and the dissolution following it. Even the states of dreaming and waking are preferable to this sleeping state. At least in these lower states one may sometime get a chance to rise through deep sleep (suṣupti) into Self-revelation (turyā) and beyond. But a person caught in deep sleep, has to wait for ages to get another chance in the next creation.

The fourth state of animation (turyā) is considered to be

really pure. In turya one experiences an intuitive realization of the true nature of the Self and so it has been called the state of Self-revelation. It also is analyzed into four substates or steps. Beings at its lowest step are known as vijñānākalas. They experience their true Self as nothing but pure and effulgent consciousness, free from all misery. However, they do not realize their divine potency. This lowest step of Self-realization (turyā) can be attained through the practices of Advaita Vedānta. Because of the limitations of this level, Advaitins cannot see the divine creative power in absolute Consciousness. They remain at this level of turyā for ages until by the grace of some superior being they are elevated to a higher level of Self-realization.

At the second higher stage of Self-realization, beings see themselves as omniscient, omnipotent, pure and infinite consciousness, but experience objective existence as different from themselves. This type is known as mantra beings. Vidyeśvara is another name given to mantra beings because they possess vidyā, the correct knowledge of the Self. The third and fourth steps of Self-revelation are the states obtained by mantreśvaras and mantra-maheśvaras respectively. They are purer beings because they see all objective existence as their own form. Their Self-awareness shines as "this is myself" and as "I am this" respectively. A sense of this-ness shines more prominently in mantreśvaras while I-ness shines predominantly in mantra-maheśvaras.

The function of animation that reveals the Self in these four types of pure beings in turya is called udāna. It leads practitioners higher and higher towards perfect Self-realization while objective manifestation becomes increasingly refined in them. Udāna has been described metaphorically as a spiritual fire that burns the dirt of mental vikalpas (ideation) and leads to nirvikalpa (ideation-free) realization of the Self.

All four types of beings in deep sleep, from vijñānākalas to mantra-maheśvaras, are free of all ideation. These beings experience both their sense of "I-ness" and "this-ness" through a subtle, luminous Self-awareness that is completely beyond any mental ideation. This is because they are situated in a plane of existence which transcends all mental and physical existence.

The highest point in the state of Self-revelation is reached by beings called akalas. An akala sees only his divine, pure, and potent Self, and that alone. He is aware of only "I-ness" which is infinite, perfect, pure, omniscient, and omnipotent in character. Akala beings are therefore called Śivas. Their consciousness contains every-thing in itself, or to put it another way, everything lies within them in the form of pure consciousness. Because of the purity of realization reached by akalas, the authors of Śaivism used the term vyāna to describe the fifth function of animation. Vyāna is all pervading pure consciousness, the effulgent luster of limitless

subject. It is the purest type of animation which shines in those beings, pure akalas, who see I-ness alone.

Although we have been describing subtle beings who reside at levels transcending ordinary mental and physical existence, these hierarchical levels of existence are also considered to be potential states for human beings who have a powerful commitment to spiritual growth.

All four states of animation (jāgrat, svapna, susupti, and turyā), which are present in the whole range of beings from sakala to akala, rise and fall in the transcendental, absolute, infinite and pure consciousness called turyātītа, the truth that transcends even the Self-revealing state of animation (turyā). As has already been said, this transcendental truth should not be counted as one of the states of animation because all these states belong to it, emanate out of it, and get absorbed back into it. It is the final truth of everything thought over or talked about. It is not a state, but the ultimate Reality which shines in each of the four states from turyā to jāgrat.

CHAPTER 4

Life - Its Nature and Seven Levels of Beings

What is life? This is a question that has been troubling people all over the world for as long as we have records of human thought and doubtless long before that. This problem has been approached in many different ways. Some thinkers have taken growth and reproduction to be the basic signs of life. Others have included hunger, thirst, the states of sleeping and waking, and the feelings of pleasure, pain, wonder, disgust, etc., as basic signs of life. The activities of objective knowing and doing have been singled out as life's essential signs by some thinkers, and others claim that consciousness alone is its true essence.

Growth and reproduction are, no doubt, signs of living organisms in this physical existence, because the living bodies of animals and plants do grow and reproduce. However, growth by itself is not a sufficient criteria because scientists have shown that lifeless matter also can grow. Even a living body should not be taken to be animate just because it grows or reproduces. As was discussed in Chapter 3, it is animate because of something else, which for the time being is related to it. Had life been the body's own essence, then the physical form would never die. Life should be thought of instead as some force that enables a body to grow and to reproduce. Growth and reproduction are simply examples of the

effects of life's presence in an organism and should not be considered the essential nature of life itself.

There are difficulties with these other suggested definitions of life as well. The functions of gross animation like hunger and thirst, and the functions of one's interior senses like pleasure and pain, are experienced in the waking and dreaming states only. Life continues in deep dreamless sleep even though these functions cease entirely. Therefore these qualities also cannot be considered the essential signs or definitions of life.

The same problem exists when we consider the activities of objective knowing and doing. These functions also vanish in a state of deep sleep. We continue to be alive in deep sleep even when we are doing nothing and our awareness of objects has vanished. Therefore ordinary knowing and doing cannot be taken as the essential features of life itself.

There is, however, an interesting point about knowing that needs to be clarified. Obviously, some element of knowing must exist even in a state of dreamless sleep, because when we wake up, we retain various impressions of the absolute non-existence of any objective element in that state. Had we not experienced this non-existence, we could not have recollected it upon awaking. It is because of this experience of a void and its impressions on us, that we can afterwards recollect that we did not perceive anything in deep sleep.

What is happening in this situation? According to Kashmir

Śaivism, when we are in deep sleep we experience the existence of our own subtle Self* freed from all objective knowing and doing. This Self which we experience while in deep sleep is not the physical body, nor the mind, nor any senses or organs, nor the forces of gross animation, nor even the understanding capacity. It is the simple and pure sense of I-consciousness that transcends all the above-mentioned gross and subtle elements.

The sages of Kashmir Śaivism made themselves masters of understanding this I-consciousness. They repeatedly experienced and examined its essence while in deep states of meditation, and then described it in their philosophical writings. Down through the centuries they have all arrived at the same point of understanding: we are consciousness, and this consciousness is luminous. We can say it is the basic nature of consciousness to be luminous, because it shines and makes itself apparent without the help of any inner or outer forms of knowledge. This 'I' is, therefore, Self-luminous. What is more, anything that ever appears to us in our experience does so through the grace of this inner luminosity, and this luminosity is always conscious of its own existence. Consciousness pervades all the three states of sleeping, dreaming and waking. Life devoid of consciousness has never been experienced in any of these states. So, what is the

*We will differentiate this Self from the regular concept of individual, personal self or ego, by use of capital 'S' for the transcendent "Self."

essence of life? It is nothing but consciousness.

Having focused on the essence of life, let us now look at various aspects of consciousness. In Kashmir Saivism, consciousness is described as a kind of stirring which is always Self-evident. This being Self-evident is a subtle kind of knowing. It is a subjective knowing as opposed to the objective knowing mentioned above. Consciousness can also be described as an activity because it is experienced by yogins as a kind of stir. It is also an activity because it becomes evident and aware of itself and this quality of being apparent and aware can be denoted by a verb.

So the basic Self-consciousness of a living being is both a kind of inner directed knowing and doing. Knowing is itself a subtle activity which involves an element of luminosity. Doing, on the other hand, cannot exist without the element of knowing. Or perhaps it could be put this way: if there is no doing, how can there be knowing; if there is no knowing, how can there be doing? So knowing and doing can be accepted as the two essential aspects of consciousness. Both these aspects of consciousness exist inseparably in it. Therefore this subtle subjective knowing and doing can be taken as two essential signs of all life.

All living beings have the capacity to know and to do. It is their basic nature to always be inclined to know and to do. Knowing one's transcendental Self in the dreamless state constitutes an activity in this sense. In deep sleep the main

X That is to say that mind, though aware of its existence, does not know anything other than that in such state.

mind
manas

Manas in Indian philosophy is the name given to ~~the~~ that capacity of ~~objective thinking~~ the ~~se~~ self through which it conducts objective thinking. Such capacity ~~wanes~~ wanes, for the time being, while one is in deep sleep.

line no. 11 add — because it is not aware of its

universal aspect.

outward ?
~~outward~~ outwards ?

life function is the activity of subjective knowing. In the dreaming state, some objective knowing and doing is present as well, and the life force functions through the interior senses and organs which, in this inner state, are exclusively mental in character. By contrast, the senses and the knowing mind, are not functioning at all in an absolutely dreamless state. Therefore the life force, or animation, must reside in some entity which transcends even the ~~mind~~ manas and other interior senses. As we have shown, Saivism describes this entity as the pure consciousness of the transcendental Self of a living being. It can be called individual Self-consciousness because it is not aware of its universal aspect.

The functions of animation, which are focused at a very subtle level of subjective knowing and doing in the deep sleep (susupti) state, expand increasingly outward in the dreaming and waking states. The life force extends itself through the mental body in the dreaming state (svapna), creating dream images and a false sense of reality. In the waking state (jagrat), these life functions spread to the physical body, and its various senses and organs become directed outward to interact with the real world. In these two exterior states, objective knowing and objective doing predominate, while in the fully interior state of dreamlessness both these activities of life are solely subjective in nature. In short, all life is consciousness. Knowing and doing are the two mutually inseparable aspects of consciousness which form the essence of all life at all stages of existence.

As we discussed in Chapter 3, human beings are basically the creatures of the waking state (jāgrat), though we have occasional experiences of the other states of life as well. According to the principles of Indian philosophy, there is a hierarchy of types of existence where superior forms of life, or spiritual beings, are manifested. For example, the dreaming existence (svapna), where gross matter does not exist, is considered vastly superior to this physical existence of ours. Beings belonging to that existence work and function in a manner which precisely resembles that of our dreaming experiences. They are involved in a subtle mental form of doing and knowing. They experience pleasure and pain, and have all the same types of emotions and instincts that we have, but are free from the limitations of a physical body. Like us, they are subjected to passions of all sorts and are continuously seeking fulfillment. They also experience thirst and hunger, but of course do not require any actual water or food. All aspects of their bodies are absolutely subtle and consequently free from the usual demands of physical existence. Their ability to achieve both sensual and spiritual goals is far superior to mortals on the physical plain. These beings are not as susceptible to death and disease, and appear immortal next to us. But, as we have seen, they also eventually face dissolution and transmigration. The different types of heavens, as conceived in various sects of Hinduism as well as in other religions of the world, can be understood as

being different regions or different worlds of this dream existence. Beings residing in these heavens are what we commonly know as gods, demigods, supergods, etc.

The deep sleep state is another example of a still superior existence. It transcends even the subtle existence of heavenly worlds. Life in this realm consists of a calm and luminous consciousness whose only limitation is a sense of subtle ego or individuality. Beings in this realm do not have objective experiences, nor are they conscious of any emotions, instincts, or passions. They rest in the calmness of the void of pure space while experiencing a type of absolute tranquillity. The only function of their life is to be constantly aware of this calm individual Self-consciousness which is only limited by a mild sense of ego. At the mortal level, those who have attained liberation as taught by Nyaya-Vaisesika and Buddhism are examples of beings in the sleeping state (susupti).

Sometimes, when a person experiences an intense emotion, they will forget their individual ego and temporarily merge into universal Self-consciousness. At times like this, a person experiences a powerful sense of unity with everything in their environment, becomes free of all worries and cares, and is temporarily immersed in the blissfulness of the inner Self. This is sometimes referred to as a "peak experience" in the West. In Indian philosophy it is known as the state of intuitive revelation (turīya). This is the fourth state of

life. While the sleeping state transcends all physical and mental existence, the state of revelation (turīyā) allows a person to experience a blissful state of unity with the infinite diversity of all creation. The bliss experienced in this state is positive in nature, and is not simply that absence of all pleasure and pain experienced while in deep sleep. During revelation one feels infused with the blissful glow of one's own pure consciousness. But this state is often so short-lived that we are unable to examine and understand what has happened to us. It often leaves only a faint impression in our being, and even the memory of it may eventually fade away. However, practice in yoga, devotion, and various other spiritual activities can help to increase the duration of the experience of this state of Self-revelation.

There is a superior type of existence which basically belongs to this fourth state. Beings who exist in this state enjoy the constant bliss of their pure and Self-luminous consciousness. The most highly evolved beings in this fourth kind of existence have already merged the whole objective universe into their individual subjective consciousness, and have also merged their individual Self-consciousness into that infinite and universal consciousness out of which everything emanates and into which everything gets absorbed. As a result, they enjoy a state of unbounded, eternal, blissful, and absolute monistic unity which pulsates continuously with pure consciousness. The spiritual pulsation of this infinite and

pure consciousness is known as its divine essence. It alone is the basic cause of the creation and dissolution of the four types of existence discussed above. It alone is the source of all the divine activities of creation, preservation, dissolution, obscuration and revelation. This infinite consciousness is called God because of its infinite capacity and eternal involvement in these five divine activities.

There are many spiritual practices taught by saints, seers, sufis, siddhas, devotees, etc., which can lead to different levels of the above-mentioned fourth state of existence. As a result, ordinary people who are unusually adept and devoted in their practice, can experience the divine powers of their real Self and their absolute unity with eternal consciousness. Such people are perhaps rare, but it should be kept in mind that the superior type of existence that arises in the state of Self-revelation is not restricted to non-wordly beings.

From where did life emerge? This is another question that has always puzzled the world's great thinkers. Scientists say that life is a special quality and function of certain material substances, and is brought about by specific changes in the material conditions and circumstances of these substances. To date, scientists have not been able to fully explain these conditions and circumstances, and have not said anything definitive about how life emerges in material substances. How could consciousness evolve out of matter?

According to the monistic Śaivism of Kashmir, the reverse is true - matter evolves out of Consciousness. Absolute Consciousness, being divinely omnipotent and having an essentially playful and vibrant nature, manifests Itself both as lifeless phenomena and as life at all the different levels of existence. This is one of the basic principles and metaphysical truths of this school of philosophy.

As already discussed, life is consciousness. It has two aspects: luminosity (prakāśa) and Self-awareness (vimarśa). This one infinite Consciousness is absolutely powerful and is the one source of everything in the universe. All of creation lies within Consciousness in the form of divine potency. According to Śaivism, this Consciousness is essentially playful and so hides its powers in various ways. In so doing, it appears in the form of infinitely varied living beings with different abilities to understand and control their lives (in the philosophy, "to know and to do"). Jada is the term given to insentient objects, in which knowing and doing, the two main aspects of sentience, do not get manifested at all. Otherwise, as Abhinavagupta has pointed out, there is nothing which is basically different from absolute Consciousness (T.A.I.332). A perfect Siva-yogin sees everything in the universe and beyond as only one absolute, divinely potent and perfectly pure Consciousness. Various dualities may appear in the use of words like 'sentient' and 'insentient' as these are traditionally needed and used for worldly transactions, but

this does not alter the above non-dualistic vision of a true Śiva-yogin. These dualistic linguistic traditions have been formulated by ordinary people living in the field of māyā and working under the influence of worldy limitations (kañcukas). The views on the origin and the real nature of life discussed above, are based on the yogic realizations of highly evolved ancient masters of Śaiva yoga. These truths can be realized and verified at any time by any one who undertakes with real devotion and discipline the study and practice of this philosophy.

We will now examine the seven categories of living beings as they are explained in Kashmir Śaivism. As an introduction, it is important to know and understand various terms and concepts used in this aspect of the philosophy. Phenomenal existence is constituted by the triangular arrangement of pramātṛ, the subject that is capable of knowing, prameya, the object that is known, and pramāṇa, the instrumental element or the process of knowing. Knowing, being itself an activity, includes the element of doing as well. All of creation is made up of pramātṛ, prameya, and pramāṇa, and all of this lies within absolute Consciousness, called Paramaśiva, and is manifested outwardly by Him through the ~~divine~~ extrovertive play of His divine essence.

The subjective element (pramātṛ) has been classified in Śaivism into seven main categories. Although these categories of beings are mentioned in the Āgamas of Southern India, they

have been discussed philosophically in Kashmir Śaivism alone.

God, Himself, creates the first five tattvas from Śiva to pure vidya. Having created the first two, Śivatattva and Saktitattva, He appears there in the forms of sambhava and sakta beings respectively. These beings never lose awareness of their infinite and pure I-consciousness, and are always one with their infinite and divine potency as well. The aspects of Śivahood and Śaktihood shine predominantly in these two types of beings. But since Śivahood and Śaktihood are just two aspects of one truth, and since both these types of beings are always aware of their perfect unity and shine as infinite 'I' alone, they are included in the same category of beings known as akalas. The term akala can be understood as follows: kalā is the name given to the primary evolute of maya. Since both śambhava and śākta beings always remain free from kalā and all its evolutes, they are termed as akalas, or, "not kalas." Akalas are perfectly pure beings, aware only of their subjective element, infinite, pure, and divinely potent I-consciousness. They have no awareness of any form of object (prameya) or process of knowing (pramāṇa). Because they are the beings living in this state of perfect unity, they are also known as śivas.

God, while manifesting objective existence within the luminous purity of His infinite consciousness, also creates the last three of the five tattvas belonging to the plane of vidyā. These are known as Sadāśiva-tattva, Īśvara-tattva and pure

vidyā tattva. The beings living in these three tattvas have different experiences of reality. Beings created by Him in Sadaśiva-tattva see the faintly shining objective element of 'this-ness' within their infinite subjective I-ness and become aware of themselves as "I am this" (aham idam). Beings at this level are known as mantra-maheśvaras. The element of this-ness starts to shine more prominently in the beings in Iśvara-tattva, and they become aware of themselves as "this is my Self" (idam aham). These beings are also considered pure and are called mantreśvaras. The concept of unity in diversity, which these two categories of beings experience, is known as śuddha-vidyā. This term describes the pure luminosity of their consciousness which serves them as their instrumental element (their body, senses, mind, and organs).

Māyā is the only impure tattva created by Paramaśiva Himself. It serves as an āvaraṇa, that is, a veil to conceal the real qualities (purity, unity, divinity, potency etc.) of I-consciousness. The Lord spreads a very subtle covering made of mayà over the pure beings living at the lowest level of the plane of vidyā, thereby creating the fourth category of beings known as mantras. They are aware of their being pure, infinite and divinely potent I-consciousness, but, having come under this thin cover of māyā, they see objects - the element of this-ness - as different from themselves. The element of this-ness is the maya-tattva out of which the whole impure aspect of existence is created by the Lord when he descends to

this level in the form of Anantanātha. Anantanātha is the master of māyā and the deity worshipped by mantra beings, working under his administration. This lower stage of the vidyā plane is known as mahāmāyā, the abode of mantra beings. Since these beings are not confused about the nature of their true Self, they are considered to be masters of the correct knowledge of the Self. Because of this they are also called Vidyeśvaras.

All four categories of living beings mentioned above, akalas, mantra-maheśvaras, mantreśvaras, and mantras or vidyeśvaras, are included in the category of pure creation. This category is created by God Himself, without his delegating power to any of His incarnations like Lord Sadāśiva, Īśvara, or Anantanātha. In vidyeśvars beings, limitation (māyā) appears merely as a viewpoint of diversity which causes them not to see the element of this-ness as identical with their true Self. This is the thinnest impurity of màyá known as mayiya-mala. But, as has been said above, vidyeśvaras are considered to be part of pure creation because they do not descend to transmigratory existence.

These four types of beings, all exist in the awareness of their purity, infinity, and, above all, their divine potency. Some of them, following the will of Lord Paramaśiva, assume positions of authority in the administration of divine activity. Some live for aeons in the plane of pure vidyā, continually enjoying the blissfulness of their pure and potent

existence until they reach a state of perfect satisfaction. Finally, they are able to shed off the thin cover of individuality and see themselves as none other than Paramaśiva, thereby expanding themselves into becoming one with the Absolute Lord. Mantra-maheśvaras generally remain merged in their experience of blissful purity and potency. To a great extent, so do mantreśvaras. Mantras, being aware of diversity, are usually involved in divine administration, conducting the activities of creation, etc., according to the will of Paramaśiva. Mantras, acting out of graciousness, help impure beings along the path leading to liberation. According to Śaivism, five divine beings named Īśāna, Tatpuruṣa, Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva, and Aghora, who imparted the Śaiva Āgamas to saints (siddhas) in this world, are examples of beings who belong to this mantra category.

The five divine activities of the Lord are more effectively conducted by the deities of a still lower level; for instance by Śrīkaṇṭhanātha and Umāpatinatha, who are the incarnations of Īśvara Bhaṭṭāraka descended to the plane of prakṛti.

Māyā, which only causes a mild loss of unity consciousness in vidyeśvara beings, grows to its full limiting potential in all the remaining tattvas which are the impure creations of Anantanātha. At this level of impure creation, māyā takes the form of āṇava-mala ("the impurity of individuation"), which hides the infinite nature of beings in māyā and reduces them to

the position of anus or beings having extreme finitude as their essential character. Anava-mala is that impurity which makes a person think of themselves as limited in nature. Instead of seeing themselves as absolute consciousness, they identify with the small individuated self, or ego.

There are two types of anava-mala. The first type occurs when God, appearing as an ordinary person (anu), conceals His nature of pure consciousness and becomes identified with basically insentient substances like the body and the mind. According to Kashmir Saivism there are four of these substances.

1) The physical body, made of material substances, which helps us conduct mundane activities.

2) The mental body, consisting of the subtle organs, the senses, and the mind with its predominant element of buddhi (the understanding capacity). These allow us to have various mental experiences of pleasure, pain, etc. as well as definite ideas about the world around us.

3) The life force which allows us to feel hunger, thirst, slumber, wakefulness, etc.

4) The finite I-consciousness known as the void state (sunya), which allows us to continue functioning in the sleeping state.

The second type of anava-mala goes beyond mis-identification of the Self with some insentient substance, to the experience of having one's actions and knowledge limited.

In this form of anava-mala, we imagine that we are only capable of knowing and doing a certain finite amount. As a result, we lose our natural state of omniscience and omnipotence.

The more subtle mayiya impurity, which causes people to focus on diversity rather than unity, grows into its full-fledged form in the plane of māyā. Consequently beings there can only see the separation between: 1) subject and object, 2) one subject and another subject, and, 3) one object and another object. What is more, these beings, having been deprived by māyā of their perfect Self-sufficiency, imagine themselves to be imperfect and deficient. The resultant lack of confidence causes them to continuously attempt to compensate for their shortcomings with external objects and events. This constant passion for outer objects is known in Saivism as lolika. Lolika continuously wells up within people who are restricted by feelings of Self-limitation (the ānava impurity). The resulting distractions and misunderstandings keep such people bound to limited forms of ordinary knowledge and action, and they do not realize their own true potential.

In this state, the deeds committed by a person are either good or bad according to the law of niyati which always governs the ordinary person. The impressions of such deeds constantly drive people from one life to another in endless cycles of transmigration. They are driven by the hope that their acts will accomplish what they most desire. But according to

Kashmir Saivism, all actions are performed by the Lord Himself, or to put it another way, at every level of existence His all-pervading divine will controls and drives everyone from within. But, because He has created an egotistic belief in each finite being, everyone imagines that they themselves are acting and knowing. These egocentric feelings about our actions and the above mentioned residual impressions of past actions (karma-samskāras) are known as kārma mala, the impurity of karman. This impurity makes people responsible for the deeds they commit, and that responsibility drives them endlessly through the cycles of transmigratory existence. This egocentric concern with our actions (kārma mala) is thus the cause of everyone's greatest miseries. It is based on dualistic vision (māyiya mala), and also results from both types of āṇava-mala - a mistakened identity with the ego, body, etc., and a generalized sense of finitude and limitation. Āṇava is actually the root cause of all our miseries because it is the basic reason that we think of themselves as limited, and this sense of limitation is the main cause for staying bound in this miserable existence. It should be noted here that mantra beings are not subject to these feelings of limitation (āṇava-mala), and even though they are subject to subtle experiences of diversity (māyiya-mala), they are included in the category of pure and liberated beings. This is the position that Kashmir Saivism takes with respect to impure finite beings.

According to this philosophy, all finite beings, from

amoebas to heavenly gods, suffer from māyiya-mala, both types of ānava-mala, and kārma-mala as well. All of them are bound in transmigratory existence. They are known as sakala beings and are considered to be totally bonded souls. Sakala beings exist in the plane that has evolved out of a sense of limited creative power or authorship (kala), and are bound by all its evolutes. These beings reside in their physical bodies in the waking state, and in their mental bodies while in dreaming existences. Beings residing in deep sleep (susupti) are known as pralayākalas because they remain free from kalā and its evolutes up to the end of the aeon of the next pralaya. A pralaya marks the dissolution of all mental and physical entities back into cosmic energy. This transformation is known as mūla prakrti. When Lord Śrīkaṇṭanātha proposes a fresh creation of mental and physical tattvas, he shakes up the cosmic energy, disturbing the equilibrium of guṇas. This awakens all the pralayākalas from their long deep sleep, and propels them again into transmigration according to the status of their karmic deeds before they had attained pralaya-kalahood. Some of them, having a sufficient amount of yoga practice to their credit from their previous life, are graced by Śrīkaṇṭhanātha and allowed to evolve into higher realms.

Pralayākalas are thus also bonded beings. They, along with sakalas, are considered to be limited beings belonging to the impure existence of māyā. Pralayākalas are bound by both types of self-limitation (ānava-mala). They are also affected

by egocentric concerns and the weight of past actions (karma-mala), but it remains suspended and will not affect them as long as they remain in deep sleep (susupti). Similarly, they are affected by dualistic vision (māyiya-mala) only when they come back to waking existence. Otherwise, the pralayakala's freedom from mayiya impurity is proved by their vision being free of any diversity.

Practitioners of Buddhism can attain pralayakalahood in the state of apavedya-susupti, or deep sleep which is free from all objective experiences. Successful practitioners of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika can also attain the pralayakala state, as can most of the followers of Sāmkhyayoga systems. Some of these practitioners, who remain vigilantly aware of their own being as pure consciousness, attain the state of the next higher level of being known as vijñānākalas. A person in this state feels themselves to be pure and infinite consciousness, free from all mental and physical limitations. However they do not appreciate an awareness of their divine potency. They experience themselves as absolutely inactive pure consciousness and so do not recognize their inner divine essence. Because they do not realize the divine stirring of spanda as their own true nature, they suffer from the second type of self-limitation (ānava-mala).

Most practitioners of Advaita Vedānta attain the state of vijñānākalas and after death continue to exist there until the next fresh creation emerges out of cosmic energy. At the time

of this fresh creation, Lord Śrīkanthanātha causes some of them to descend into transmigratory existence to conduct the divine activity of grace (anugraha) on the bound sakalas. But most of them are graciously pulled up by the Lord and are admitted to the plane of pure vidyā. But those Vedantins who experience themselves as "cidanandalahari" (the surge of the blissfulness of consciousness), do not enter into the state of vijñānākalas, but move up quickly to the higher states of pure vidyā. Vijñānākalas exist at a level between pure and impure beings. They are considered to be bound beings as long as they do not move out of māyā.

People who have evolved to the point of seeing all objective phenomenon as one with themselves are considered to be masters (pati-s). These beings dwell in the state which is often described as "unity in diversity." People who view objects as different from themselves and who are bound by klesas, karmans etc. are metaphorically called pasus, meaning bound cattle. Akalas, mantra-mahesvaras, and mantresvaras, are definitely patis. Mantras, though seeing objective existence as different from themselves, are also included among patis, because they are free from karman, and klesas etc. Sakalas are definitely pasus and so are pralayakalas because they are bound by pasas or chains of maya. Vijnanakalas are those pasus who are waiting for admission to patihood.

Each of the seven categories of living beings mentioned above can be further analyzed into many sub-varieties. For

instance, sakala beings have been classified into fourteen varieties: eight types of gods, five types of lower animals, and one type of human being (S.K. 53). It should also be noted that certain authors who write about Kashmir Saivism place akala beings in two separate groups, sambhavas and saktas, thus bringing the number of beings to eight instead of the seven we have described here.

In summary, consciousness is the basic definition of life, infinite consciousness is the original source of all life, and according the the principles of Kashmir Saivism, there are seven main types of living beings. These universal truths have been discovered and transmitted through the direct intuitional experiences of great Sivayogins like Somananda, Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta.

CHAPTER 5

FOUR TYPES OF SPEECH

Bhartṛhari, the ancient Sanskrit grammarian who was the originator of the philosophy of Sanskrit grammar, says in his Vākyapadīya, "The eternally existent Brahman, being the changeless essence of speech, appears in the form of phenomenal substance out of which the process of universal existence proceeds" (V.P.I.1)

How does word or speech become mind and matter? Many grammarians down through the centuries since Bhartṛhari have tried to elucidate the principle of śabda-brahman, or divinely potent Brahman, the One who speaks and creates the Universe. Some scholars said that Brahman uttered the word 'bhu', meaning earth, and the earth actually came into existence. They also quoted various scriptural passages like "having uttered 'earth', he created the earth" (bhūrityuktvā bhuvamasṛjat) in an attempt to explain creation. But none of these writers has presented a convincing, logical, or psychologically sound explanation for the principle concerned, and sabda-brahman has remained a mystery to all the successors of Bhartṛhari.

However, the authors of Kashmir Saivism, especially Somānanda, Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta, have successfully explained and clarified śabda-brahman. Their ability to understand and convey this spiritual concept was due to their practice and mastery of Śaiva yoga. This practice awakened in

them a deep intuitive understanding which allowed them to experience directly the essence and truth of this particular principle and of spiritual philosophy in general. In this chapter we will present a summary of their views regarding śabda-brahman and a discussion of the four categories of speech as set forth in this philosophy.

Speech is not only the means to convey one's ideas to others, it is also a way to understand things personally. When we choose to convey ideas to others we generally use spoken language, known as vaikharī, or its written version. The Sanskrit word vikhara refers to the hard, gross form of a being which serves as the abode for vaikharī. Thus vaikharī is gross speech.

A finer form of speech which serves as the medium for thinking and understanding, through which a person forms definite and indefinite ideas about words and their meanings, is mental speech. A word, its meaning, and the undifferentiated idea of both, are always closely combined in our understanding. We never form any idea of a thing without mixing it with some word-image, known as abhilāpa, that shines within our consciousness as the essence of the idea. Such word-images penetrate and pervade both definite and indefinite ideas, and are in fact the essence of our ideas. This more subtle level of speech is called madhyamā. This term means both interior and in-between. It is considered interior speech because it has the subtle body puryaṣṭaka as its abode. It is

considered in-between because of its position between vaikhari (gross, physical body) and pasyanti, that spiritual form of a being which consists of pure I-consciousness.

As we have said, madhyamā speech contains word image, word meaning, and a unified idea of both shining together within consciousness. There is also a mutual diversity of these three elements in madhyamā, though they are not as distinctly separate as in vaikharī. If we carefully contemplate our thought process we can become aware that our ideas, our word images, and the objects understandable through these words and images, are actually three different elements having a close mutual relationship. It is because of this that Patanjali differentiates these three elements of speech by saying, "Gaur iti sabda, gaur-ityarthah, gauritijnanam," or "the word cow, the object as a cow, and the idea of a cow." All three elements of madhyamā shine simultaneously inside the faculty of a person's understanding, but they shine there as three different elements, bound together by a sort of mutual inseparability. In this case, inseparability does not mean unity. Rather, it is a constant relationship inside the field of diversity.

The ancient authors of Kashmir Saivism have further clarified the principles of speech in the following way. Awareness is, in reality, the basic essence of all speech. We think of and talk about only those things of which we are already aware. Then, when we choose to make others aware of

these things, we speak about them. Awareness, or vimarśa, is thus the basic source of all speech, while the activities of thinking, understanding, speaking and writing are just the outward manifestations of awareness. It should also be noted that the closely related act of listening is actually aimed at forming further awareness.

Madhyamā is thus an internal reflectional manifestation of awareness taking the form of ideas. It is also an outer directed activity because it shines as something other than the thinking subject (pramātr). Vaikhari is the reflection of awareness in a still grosser form of outwardness. When vaikhari spreads out in the form of sound, it develops in the listener a type of awareness similar to that which exists in the mind of the speaker. In this way, the whole process of madhyamā and vaikharī revolves around awareness or vimarsa.

A still finer level of speech, far subtler in character than madhyamā, is known as paśyantī which resides in the inner most part of our being. Through its medium, an enlightened person can behold all objective existence within himself, and so it has been given the name paśyantī, the beholding speech. Since paśyantī is found within the pure being of a person, beyond mind and everything mental, the tendency to make distinctions among words, word meanings, and the idea of both, has little or no effect in this form of speech. In other words, paśyantī shines in a state that transcends all types of ideation or vikalpa, because ideas are formed by the mind.

Pasyanti beholds objective existence in its undiversified form of simple 'this-ness' (idantā), but in the process does not form any idea or vikalpa about it. Paśyantī shines within as a pure Self-awareness and appears as I am this (aham idam), where the aspect of this-ness is very faint. This is known as the stage of partial unity. Since all three elements of mental speech shine in paśyantī in an undiversified form, and since both the beholding subject (aham), and the beheld object (idam), are present in paśyantī, clearly there exists an awareness of more than one element. Therefore, this form of speech is said to belong to a stage of partial diversity as well.

Vaikharī and madhyamā consist of sounds and ideas which clearly fall into the concept of speech. But one might easily wonder why the word speech is used in connection with paśyantī which is conducted by awareness alone. Being the medium of the revelation of the finer essence of all existence, paśyantī is still considered to be a form of speech (vāc), because speech is broadly defined in the philosophy as a medium of non-perceptional and non-inferential revelation. Even the most subtle form of awareness may eventually evolve into expressing itself through speech. Also, paśyantī is conceived of as speech because, even in its unspoken form, it is still a subtle form of self expression of the beholder.

Words, images of words, and ideas, shine in both vaikharī and madhyamā forms of speech in a definite order. But no

successiveness of any kind appears in paśyantī. At this level, speech is therefore defined as "akramā" or "saṃhṛtakramā", that is, speech in which the order of successiveness becomes totally dissolved. It has further been defined as 'svarūpa-jyotiḥ', the self-luminosity of the beholding subject.

There are several ways to experience the paśyantī state. An attentive and sensitive person can have a momentary glimpse of it during some powerful emotional experience involving anger, joy, wonder, bewilderment, etc. But usually these episodes, sometimes know as peak experiences, are so short lived, and most people's minds are so sluggish, that no real introspection or understanding of what has happened is possible. An extremely attentive person can experience the paśyantī state in between the arising of two ideas. Pure I-consciousness will be experienced as shining in this gap as the essential connecting link of the two ideas. Finally, a clear realization of paśyantī can be experienced through the practice of Śaivayoga. When, through the practices of meditation, etc., one's mind becomes free from all ideas and and even the activity of thinking, it becomes one with the luminosity of the pure consciousness of the Self. The resulting state of Self-awareness of unity in diversity (paśyantī), becomes apparent through its own luminosity, provided the practitioners do not lose themselves in dreamless sleep. A Śivayogin also experiences paśyantī in the presence of that kind of pure perception, known as nirvikalpa-samvedana, which arises before

mental ideation. An advanced Śivayogin can easily realize and relish paśyantī on all such occasions.

In summary, paśyantī is that Self-awareness in which both I-ness and this-ness shine simultaneously. They are knit together by a relation known in the philosophy as "unity in diversity." I am this (aham idam) is the form of this Self-awareness. Since it beholds "thisness", it is called pasyanti, the beholding Self-awareness.

There is another type of awareness beyond paśyantī, known as parāvāc, the supreme speech, which does not behold any this-ness, but shines (beholding) only itself. It shines as the luminous revelation of just one thing - the pure subjective I-consciousness transcending all physical and mental means of knowledge. The pure awareness of the Self shines in parāvāc as the infinite, eternal, all-containing, perfect, pure, and divinely potent subject that is 'I'. It is not a subject in relation to any object, but only an absolute and independent subject. To put it another way, the experience of being this subject does not depend on any form of relationship with an object. However, it is within the perfectly independent power of infinite consciousness to manifest objects at will. But, unless this process of creation begins, no object at all appears in parāvāc, the supreme speech. It shines only as I-ness (aham), and never as this-ness (idam). All objective existence remains merged within this I-consciousness, just the way all the elements of a plant lie merged in its seed.

Again one might wonder how something so subtle could be considered speech. It must be remembered that awareness is the essence of all speech, and speech is a means of revelation. Since the pure lustre of this I-consciousness is actually infinite awareness, and since it reveals to us the correct and true nature of our real Self, parà-vāc is included as the most subtle form of speech. This is the supreme and transcendental speech consisting of pure awareness of the real Self. This infinite Self-awareness, enlightening the supreme truth is considered to be parāvanī, the supreme speech. Utpaladeva writes about it in the following way:

> "Self awareness is the very soul of consciousness. It is spontaneously arising supreme speech (vāc) and is that Self-dependence of the Absolute God which is known as His supreme Lordship. It is a kind of vibrative activity, and is the supreme basic existence, unconditioned by time, space, etc. Being the real essence of the supreme Lord, it is said to be His heart. It is by virtue of this self-awareness that He manifests Himself as objective existence" (I.Pr.I.5.13-15).

This all-inclusive, pure and infinite consciousness, being the source of the manifestation of all phenomena, is also known as absolute Brahman. The word Brahman is derived from the root brhi vrddhau, meaning evolution or expansion. Since this Self-awareness evolves into all phenomena as if it were a reflection, it is called Brahman, the entity which evolves in this manner. Abhinavagupta in his Vivarana on Parā-trīṁśikā explains this as follows:

> "Brahman is that infinite and all-pervading reality which has evolved (into phenomenal existence). This is not the same as the Brahman of that form of Vedanta which is similar to

sunyavada" (P.Tr.V.221).

As we have seen, awareness is an illumination which serves as the source of all speech. And in turn, speech (vāc) consists of words which are called sabdas. This is the evolution of pure subtle awareness into the gross, physical form of words. If we reverse the process and move from the gross level to the subtle, the word śabda becomes refined to include the concepts of vāc and beyond that also means divinely potent, pure, infinite, and Self-aware consciousness. It is in this context that Bhartṛhari called the supreme Brahman, śabda-brahman.

Another way to approach the relationship between the creative process and speech is through an example from our worldly lives. Let us follow the creative process of an artist from the grossest to the finest levels. First, an artist's creation can be likened to vaikharī (gross speech). Here creation is in a tangible form with which we can interact. However, an artist first forms the image of this creation mentally before producing it externally. At this stage their creation shines within them in the form of madhyamā. Before even this mental formation of the creative idea, there exists a subtle creative urge within the inner most person, something that may feel like a vague flutter, stir, or restlessness. At this even finer stage, the whole work of art, along with all its essential elements, revolves in an unmanifested and undiversified state within this inner restlessness of the

artist. This describes the work of art in the state of paśyantī. Finally, at the most subtle level, the original seed of the artistic creation, including all three stages (paśyanti, madhyamā, and vaikharī) of its outward manifestation, actually lies in the inner most center of the artist's being. The whole artistic work takes the form of this creative power within the artist. The artist is aware of having this power, and their awareness of this inner creative energy is actually their work of art in seed form shining in the stage of parā-vāc, the supreme speech.

Brahman, the almighty God, is the greatest of artists, and all of creation - the whole of phenomenal existence -is His divine art. It lies within Him in an unmanifested form. Creation shines there in its noumenal aspect consisting of pure and divinely potent infinite I-consciousness. The Absolute Reality is fully aware of the divine power or potency lying within it. This awareness of the creative energy is the parā vāc, and is the basic source of the unlimited blissfulness of the Absolute.

As this process unfolds, the surges of this blissful awareness take the form of paśyantī. At this stage the Absolute Reality becomes activity inclined to manifest Its divine powers outwardly, and simultaneously the manifestable elements start to shine faintly in an undiversified form. This restless inclination of Self-awareness is the basic paśyantī vāc. The appearance of undiversified manifestation becomes

clear and distinct at the next outward step of paśyantī. These are the Sadāśiva and the Īśvara stages respectively. The still further outward vibratory activity of paśyantī gives rise to definite images of creation in the madhyamā type of awareness. These madhyamā images are followed by their actual outward creation, known as the vaikharī state of awareness. In this way, the original essence of the whole creation, initially shining as divinely potent and pure Self-awareness, becomes manifested through various types of speech, and by stages takes up the different forms of phenomenal existence.

According to the ancient masters of Kashmir Śaivism, this is the concept that Bhartṛhari meant to convey. This philosopher's careful use of words is a clue to his intentions on the topic. For instance, because all phenomena are manifested in the same way that a reflection appears in a mirror, the pure I-consciousness does not actually become transformed into phenomenal existence. Therefore, Bhartrhari used the word "vivartate" so that he would not have his approach confused with the Sāmkhya theory of pariṇāmavāda which posits that the original Nature (mūlaprakṛti) substantially becomes the material world.* He did not use this term in the sense in which it was afterwards used by the authors of Advaita Vedanta. Therefore he did not mean to preach the doctrine that the world is illusory (vivartavāda), but was attempting to

* The translation of vivartate depends on the perspective and theory under discussion. Loosely translated it means "appears," or "manifests."

establish a theistic absolutism (see Chapter 2) like that expressed by the authors of the Āgamas and Upaniṣads.

In this way, the principal authors of Kashmir Śaivism have explained the concept of śabda-brahman, and have clarified a general understanding of the paśyantī and parā types of speech.

While they accepted the basic views of Bhartṛhari, they also went on to raise objections to the usual grammarian's interpretation of vākyapadīya on two points. First, these interpretations assert that paśyantī is itself parā. Both Somānanda and Utpaladeva criticised and refuted this assertion on the part of later grammarians. They argued that an awareness which beholds something cannot be taken as parā, the absolute transcendental speech. As we have seen, parā by definition is only aware of "I-ness" and so cannot behold something or "this-ness". What is more, the word paśyantī is derived from a root signifying an action (of seeing) denoted by a transitive verb. Therefore it must hold a position below that of parāvāṇī, the transcendental and absolute monistic reality known as Brahman in which there is no object or "this-ness" possible.

The second objection they raised concerns the previously mentioned theory of vivarta. Vivarta, as developed later in Advaita Vedanta, has two possible connotations. First, it refers to the appearance of something that does not really exist, but appears real to us because of our faulty understanding or ignorance. A mirage is an example of this

form. Second, our faulty understanding or ignorance causes us to superimpose an illusory form onto a real object. Imagining a rope to be a snake is a classical example of this form of vivarta. Applying this on a grander scale, Advaita Vedantins claim that the phenomenal universe does not really exist, but like a mirage, only appears to be real. This is the way ignorant people see the world, soul, and God according to the theory of vivarta.

The authors of Kashmir Shaivism do not agree with this theory of the Vedantins, and have raised many objections to it. They use logical arguments as well as intuitive yogic revelations in the course of describing their vision of the truth. They state that this wonderfully complex and utilitarian universe cannot possibly have ignorance or avidyā as its source, because avidya is a substanceless supposition while universal phenomena clearly have substance, utility, and are real. Drawing from their experiences in deep states of yogic practice, these writers assert that all phenomena actually exist in Brahman, or I-consciousness. They insist that all phenomena are externally manifested by the divine and playful stir of Absolute Consciousness which throbs in the form of paśyantī and vibrates out all of creation in the fields of madhyamā and vaikharī. Thus they emphasize the theistic nature of absolute reality and take its basic nature of playfulness as the cause of the appearance of all creation. These authors support the principle of theistic absolutism,

17-2-87.

To

Shri R.K.Sharma,
Assistant Educational Adviser,Skt.
Ministry of Human Resource Development,
Govt.of India,
NEW DELHI.

Sir,

This is to confirm that I will surely attend the function of the Award of certificates of Honour to Samskrit scholars at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on the 14th of March and the Rehearsal of the function on the 13th of March,1987.

With respectful regards I am-

Yours Sincerely,

Jammu.
Dated: 17-2-87.

(DR.B.N.PANDITA)
RESEARCH DIRECTOR,
SAIVA DARSANA KOSA PROJECT,
SRI RANBIR KENDRIYA SANSKRIT

(2)

Bhartrhari is the most ancient philosophical writer of India who expressed theistic absolutism in his Vakyapadiya long long before its academic development in Kashmir. Where from did he pick up such philosophical principle? Such principle was, no doubt, expressed by the authors of Upanisads in the ~~heavy past~~ prehistoric age of Indian history, but was later pushed to back ground and overshadowed by the ~~rest~~ rich academic developments of the ~~former~~ as ~~and later~~ by such Vivartavada of Advaita Vedanta. Therefore it did not really thrive for millenniums of years. It has not even now became popular with Sanskritists in India. It is a riddle as to who were the immediate predecessors of Bhartrhari in such philosophic thinking.

Sivananda comes with an answer to such riddle. He says that Theistic absolutism of Saiva yogins was prevalent in India right from the prehistoric ages. They ~~imparted~~ entrusted its theory and practice to worthy aspirants, through out millenniums of years ~~and gradually when it~~ till it became so feeble in the age of Kali that Lord Siva had to ~~send down~~ ~~Shiva~~ in order ~~to~~ the sage Durvasas to give it a fresh start and such start developed, in course of time, in the form of Kashmir Saivism. Saiva Agamas also do corroborate such ~~theory~~ fact.

Besides we can find such evidences in many ancient works which can support the correctness of the account given in Sivananda and Saiva Agama passages. For instance, (1) Bhagavadgita teaches several principles and doctrines which cannot be satisfactorily interpreted except with the help of Kashmir Saivism. Some of such riddles are: ——

(i) The yoga as taught in its sixth chapter which is definitely the Sambhava yoga of K.S. and not the yoga of Patanjali. (ii) ~~Relative higher~~ Place higher than that of knowledge given to yoga. (iii) Comprehensive gathering of jnana, smriti and apahara (iv) (These may be compared with S. Pr. ..... (v) Expression of theism as the essence of its monistic philosophical theory. (vi) ~~Contacts between~~ and Krsna and sage Durvasas.

(2) (M. Bh. ~~.....~~ (M. Bh. speaks of teacher taught relation

(1) Jnanavalekya smriti. = an ancient book on Hindu religion, a priest & a great Mudra of K.S. See S. Sm. II ..... and S.P.V. .....

Reference to certain comm. of K.S. enjoined by Parthasarathi Mishra

Prohibition of Sambhavi mudra & ~~forget~~ in Kumara Sambhava of Kalidasa.

Such evidences prove that the prohibition of the practice of Sambhavi yoga was ~~gradually~~ gradually ~~prevalent~~ in India ~~and~~ highly mentioned aspirants and Bhartrhari may have got inhibition is it through the

not vivarta. In their view, Bhartrhari was in fact saying that Brahman manifests outwardly the phenomena that exist within Him in an unmanifest state. The samvrta, or inwardly hidden, universal substance is brought by Him to the vivṛta, or clearly manifest state. This theistic and monistic absolutism, and not the vivartavāda of the followers of Sankarāchārya, is thus the fundamental philosophic principle of Bhartṛhari according to the ancient authors of Kashmir Śaivism. They take exception with the grammarian commentators of Vkyapadiya, whom they claim missed this point because they were influenced by the more commonly accepted vivarta theory of Advaita Vedānta.

CHAPTER 6

THE SPANDA PRINCIPLE

The spanda ~~doctrine~~ principle (siddhanta) is one of the most important principles of Kashmir Saivism and its development by Saiva philosophers is a valuable contribution to Indian philosophy. While the term spanda has already been introduced, the present chapter will be devoted to its discussion in detail.

The earliest mention of spanda in Saivite literature occurs in about the 2nd century B.C. in the Paramsambhumahimnastava of Durvasas, the sage who is traditionally considered to be the originator of the teachings of Saiva monism. The word spanda occurs in this hymn in two verses of the sixth section. In one verse it is praised as being that divine quality of God which allows him to keep all mental and physical phenomenon moving in their respective courses (P.S.M.st.IV.4). Another verse says that a yogin reaches liberation only after having realized his true identity as one with that superior spanda which keeps the whole universe in cosmic movement (Ibid VI.5). These early verses would appear to be the precursors of the later philosophical views on spanda expressed by Bhatta Kallata in his Spanda-karika (S.K. 6,7 and ii).

The essence of the spanda principle was developed by Vasugupta during the early part of the ninth century in the

Śiva Sutra, a scriptural work said to have been revealed to him by Lord Śiva in a dream (Sp.Vr.p.40). Vasugupta imparted the knowledge of the theoretical and practical aspects of spanda to his disciple, Bhaṭṭa Kallaṭa, who then went on to develop the principle in his Spanda-kārikā in the middle of the same century. He also wrote a brief commentary on this work. The philosophical idea denoted by the term spanda was further discussed by Somānanda in his Śivadṛṣṭi and by Utpaladeva in his Vṛtti (a brief commentary on Sivadṛṣṭi) and in his Īśvarapratyabhijñā. However, neither sage actually used the word spanda.

In the later part of the tenth century, Abhinavagupta explained the term, its philosophical significance, its essence, and details about it in several works like Īśvarapratyabhijñā-vimarśinī, Parātrīśikā-vivaraṇa, Tantrāloka, Tantrasāra, and Mālinī-vijaya-vārtika. Other commentaries on the Spanda-kārikā were written by Rāmakaṇṭha, a younger contemporary of Bhaṭṭa Kallaṭa, and by Utpala-vaiṣṇava in the early tenth century. Kṣemarāja wrote his commentary on Spanda-kārikā in the eleventh century, as well as a small work entitled Spandasandoha, which explains the philosophical idea denoted by the term spanda.

The exact significance of spanda, and its etymological derivation, has been discussed at length by Abhinavagupta in his Vimarśinī, a commentary on Utpaladeva's Īśvarapratyabhijñā. He also discusses spanda in his Vivaraṇa, a commentary of the

scriptural text Parā-trīṃśikā. In this chapter we will present a detailed explanation of these discussions on spanda in the light of the cosmogonic views Abhinavagupta expressed in his philosophical works.*

Writers in English most often use the word "vibration" to denote spanda. Indeed, spanda is a kind of vibration, but is significantly different from the nature of vibration as taught in physics. Scientists describe the vibrations of physical phenomenon like sound, light, and heat, as a movement constantly pulsating outward through space. But spanda is the double-edged movement of pure Consciousness proceeding outwardly and inwardly at the same time. This "inward" and "outward" movement does not refer to particular positions in space. Identity with "I"-ness, or Self, defines the inward movement, while identity with "this"-ness, or objectivity (and non-identity with the Self), defines the meaning of outwardness. Even though spanda has no physical movement in space, its essence pervades and controls matter and its motion at all levels. Similarly, even though spanda has no mental vibration as defined by psychology, it is still the basic

*The spanda principle is the very soul of the ontological views of the Pratyabhijñā-śāstra. Abhinavagupta quotes profusely from Spandakārikā in his Vivṛti-Vimarśinī and also in his Tantrāloka. Two couplets of the Kārikā are quoted in Sivadṛṣti-vṛtti as well. Therefore, pratyabhijñā and spanda are actually two sections of one and the same scripture (śāstra). It is unfortunate that today's scholars still define them as two separate schools of thought, simply because the pioneer research scholar, Shri. J.C. Chatterjee, mistakenly referred to them this way in the beginning of his research work on the subject. As a result, modern scholars who write about Kashmir Śaivism tend to compound these mistakes.

source of this more overt form of vibration.

The word spanda is derived from the Sanskrit root spadi-kinciccalane. Spadi means to throb, and kinciccalane means to move just a little. If spanda means calana or movement, why add kincit (a little) to it? If it is really movement, it should be accepted as such. The epithet kincit becomes purposeless because even a little movement is a movement and denotes change in position. Therefore, littleness cannot change the basic character of calana. On the other hand, if it is not a movement then the size of calana, be it little or great, will have no bearing on spanda, so why include the calana element at all? Raising these objections to the usual etymological explanation of the word, which is solely derived from the direct use of the root spadi in its strict literal sense (abhidhā), Abhinavagupta provides another explanation of the term spanda derived from the indirect use of spadi in its secondary sense (lakṣaṇā). He makes the following points:

Absolute Consciousness does not in any way move or diverge from its infinite and pure essence, nor does it ever undergo any change in its basic character. Even so, although it is changeless, there is a subtle spiritual stir within pure Consciousness which means it is not absolutely static like pure space. Its character is both static and dynamic. Its changelessness is its static aspect. The spiritual stir which moves in it is its dynamic aspect, and this is spanda. Basically, it is the stir of pure awareness through which

absolute Consciousness is always aware of Itself and Its divine nature. Consciousness is prakāśa and its Self-awareness is vimarśa. The essential character of this stir of pure vimarsa is infinite bliss. The stirring of this blissful Self-awareness (vimarśa) causes absolute Consciousness to be playful in nature, and always vitally active and engaged in the outward manifestation of Its five divine powers: creation, preservation, dissolution, Self-oblivion, and Self-recognition. Consciousness vibrates out its divine powers and all the elements of phenomenal existence in the form of a reflection (see Chapter 2). The psychic light of pure Consciousness illumines these divine powers and all of creation, and reflects them outward through its own independent, playful, and divine will. In this way, the five divine powers and all the outward manifestations of creation, are the result of spanda, the blissfully active and vibrative nature of pure Consciousness.

Because all creation happens in the manner of a reflection, God does not become involved in transformation (parinama) or change (vikāra). Rather, this process of manifestation should be understood as a kind of a divine transmutation, and the appearance of change occurs through the divine activity of Self-oblivion or obscuration. While evolving Himself outward as phenomena, He simply appears as if He were undergoing change, moving from His basic position of changelessness and consequently becoming all phenomenal existence. There is just a semblance of movement, and this

"little movement" is what the epithet kincit refers to in the root spadi kincicclane.

This can be understood also by looking at one's own mundane experience. When bliss arises within a person it is experienced as an inexplicable stirring, a wonderful dynamism shining and causing a marvelous charm in the inner Self. As in the case of absolute Consciousness described above, a person who is having a blissful experience does not remain absolutely motionless and empty like pure space. There is also the experience of dynamic charm vibrating within the inner Self. This is the experience of spanda as it shines within finite beings.

Let us now look at these key terms in a little more detail. Paramasiva and His spanda do not denote the same idea about the Absolute, nor is spanda the same as Śakti. There are several ways to understand the concept of Sakti. The Absolute is Siva and Siva is Sakti. Siva and Sakti are just two names given to the Absolute to help clarify the concepts of transcendence and immanence which have been formed about it. This is the most refined understanding of Śakti. Next, since all creation is an outward manifestation of the Śakti of Śiva, the word Śakti is often used to denote creation itself. The word Sakti is also used to denote certain steps in the process of creation. On the other hand, spanda is the blissful spiritual stir that constantly rises and falls within Śiva, by virtue of His being Śakti. Or, to put it another way, Śiva is

always charged with spanda because he is Śakti. Spanda is thus the interior manifestation of Śakti, the subtle inner stir of Śakti before the outer manifestation takes place.

Cit, ananda, iccha, jnana and kriya are the five primary powers of God, known as the five Saktis of Parma-śiva. He is cit (consciousness), and cit is both Siva and Sakti in their mutually identical position. Ananda (bliss) is the essential nature of cit; that essential nature is spanda. Spanda is thus the ānanda-śakti of Parma-śiva. It is the double-edged blissful, spiritual stir of that ocean of nectar which causes the surges and tides of infinitely varied phenomenal existence.

There are three categories of spanda which correspond to Paramaśiva, Śiva, and Śakti. At the highest level, the supreme vibrative activity (para-spanda) refers to the inward and outward movements of Śiva and Śakti. Śiva is the comparatively static aspect of changelessness, the inward stirring. Śakti is the dynamic aspect that results in the manifestation of all creation and its infinitely diverse activities, the outward stirring. Paramaśiva, the Absolute, is both Siva and Sakti by virtue of spanda which is the Absolute's essential nature. Had it not been the nature of the Absolute to move inwardly and outwardly, it alone would have existed. Actually, it would not have existed at all because there would have been no one to question or to establish its existence. In this case only a total void would have existed. But since the Absolute has spanda as its nature, it manifests within itself

all phenomena, appears itself in the form of all phenomena, yet remains unchanged in its basic character.

The second category of spanda reflects the aspect of purity and changelessness known as the Śiva aspect, and is called universal vibration (sāmānya spanda). It has the infinite potency to manifest all changes. Its natural inclination towards the manifestation of changes, known as its Śakti aspect, is called particularized vibration (viśesa spanda). All phenomenal manifestation is the result of the outward movements of viśesa spanda.

There are four steps or levels in the extroversion of viśesa spanda. The power of animation, or the alive-ness of manifestation, is the first and most subtle outward form of particularized (viśesa) spanda. Next comes that aspect of spanda which gives life to the senses and the organs of animation and which, through its shining vibrancy, allows them to function. The functioning of the physical body and its different systems comprises the third and still more exterior type of spanda. The fourth and most extroverted aspect of spanda is the rotational movement of the insentient components of matter known as atoms.

Phenomenal creation and dissolution is the result of the outward and the inward movement of particularized spanda. The Lord, while producing this universal drama, hides His real nature consisting of infinity, purity, divinity, infinite potency, etc., and appears as a finite being who considers

Himself limited and capable of doing and knowing just a little. This delusion is also a result of the outward movement of viśeṣa spanda. The next act in the drama comes when God bestows His divine grace on some finite being. That person then finds themselves turning away from ideas of their own limitation toward a path of supreme knowledge, yoga and devotion. Such a being, advancing on the path of Self-realization, finally recognizes that they are none other than Almighty God. This realization of the truth results in that infinitely charming and sweet experience of Self-bliss. As already stated, the Lord directs the whole dramatic show of divine activities just in order to have this experience of Self-discovery. This Self-bliss is the most refined and elevated aspect of the inward movement of spanda and is the means to attain sāmānya-spanda. These movements of the Lord's spanda are always going on at all levels of His infinite universal drama, because it is His essential nature to do so. This basic quality is known as His world-bliss (jagadānanda) (M.V.V.II.20).

Let us now look at how the ancient sages of Kashmir have described various facets of this principle of vibration. Somānanda describes the idea denoted by the term spanda as a unitary form of all the divine powers of Consciousness. He says that it can be realized in one's own Heart in various everyday life situations: in suddenly remembering that one has forgotten to do something very important; while experiencing an

immense joy; confronting some sudden terror; seeing some one quite unexpectedly; uttering the sound of visarga (the sixteenth vowel sound in Sanskrit phonetics written as ah:); in matrkayoga; running very, very fast; reading something out loud at high speed; undergoing sexual discharge in carya-yoga, and so on (S.D.I.9-11). Although Somananda does not actually use the word spanda, he suggests the same principle with words like sphurattā, and prasāra. He describes Śiva as sphurannirvṛta-cidvibhuḥ; aniruddhecchā-prasaraḥ, (S.D.I.,2) and sarat-prakṛtiḥ (Ibid IV-94). Although Somānanda and Bhaṭṭa Kallaṭa belonged to the same period, it appears that Somànanda wrote Śivadṛṣṭi sometime before Bhatta Kallata composed Spandakarika, or at least before it had become well-known, and before the term spanda had become popular among scholars of that time.

Utpaladeva, though not using the word spanda, describes the principle denoted by it as Self-awareness and the essence of Consciousness. He uses the following different terms: (a)parà-vàk, that supreme innermost aspect of speech, (b) perfect Self-dependence, (c) sphurattā, the pulsating flash of Self-awareness, (d) mahāsattā, absolute existence not conditioned by time, space, etc., and (e) the innermost essence of the absolute truth (I.P.I.V.13,14).

With regard to the realization of supreme spanda Abhinavagupta says:

"It is that all absorbing Self-awareness of a yogin which shines in his heart causing him to feel that all of phenomenal

existence is becoming absorbed into him. It is that principle which is called sāmānya-spanda in the śāstras, and is an activity of spilling out of the Self. It is the most subtle movement of the motionless entity. No duality shines in it. It is the surge of the ocean of Consciousness which is always replete with it (spanda)" (T.A.IV. 182-184).

Bhaṭṭa Kallaṭa describes universal and particularized spanda as the opening (unmesa) and closing (nimesa) of the eyes of God which results in the creation and the absorption of the universe. By creation and absorption he is referring to the outward and the inward movements of spanda (S.K.1). He advises aspirants to discover that tattva which causes fundamentally insentient objects, like the senses and bodily organs, to function like sentient objects (S.K.6,7). He says that universal spanda shines not only in the infinite, but even in a finite being while he is experiencing a strong emotion like anger, joy, bewilderment, or while he is running very fast.

Bhaṭṭa Kallaṭa expresses the state of wonder that comes with the realization of spanda saying: "How can a person who observes his own mastery over this nature (that is spanda), and thereby relaxes in a state of wonderful astonishment, become involved in the misery of transmigratory existence" (Ibid.11)? Here he is explaining that even a practiced yogin feels astonishment at the attainment of a state as wonderful as universal spanda.

In teaching the method for realizing superior spanda, Bhaṭṭa Kallaṭa advises aspirants to discover through deep Self-awareness that Self-effulgent entity which shines in-between the ideas which are constantly arising in the mind (Ibid.41).

It is pure Consciousness whose vibratory nature produces an endless chain of ideas. Every succeeding idea that arises emanates out of Consciousness through the outward stir of spanda, and each preceding idea becomes absorbed back into Consciousness through the inward stir of its spanda. He explains spanda as that active nature of God which keeps man in bondage as long as he does not realize its real essence, but which becomes his liberator and grants him every divine power as soon as he recognizes its truth (Ibid.48).

Bhatta Kallata, describing the binding and liberating effects of spanda, explains that: The outward currents of spanda, emerging out of universal spanda, appear to be entities like gunas, and conceal from ordinary people their real nature. As a result, these people get pushed down into fearful passages of transmigration from which it is very difficult to escape. However, these outward currents of spanda do not present any difficulty to those aspirants who possess the correct knowledge of their truth (Ibid.19,20).

The Bhagavad-gita and the Upanisads, if studied without the bias of sectarian commentaries, reveal that those ancient sages who had attained higher levels of spiritual development also discovered this truth about spanda. Later on, Saiva scriptures and philosophic treatises of Saiva monism developed an even finer understanding of this concept, dispelling all doubts and contradictions about the nature of monistic reality. By contrast, the Vijnanavadins and the Advaita-Vedantins did

not explore this higher truth. The former stopped at the state of absolute dreamless sleep, while the latter had only a minimal experience of the lowest level of turyà, the state of intuitional Self-revelation. Because Vedantins did not personally experience spanda in absolute Consciousness, they resorted to developing a hypothetical theory of avidya (beginningless ignorance) in order to explain why people see all creation as different from themselves. From where did this ignorance emerge? How did it become part of pure Consciousness? How did finite beings come into existence? How did Brahman come into contact with this ignorance, and why did he accept it as a foreign element (upādhi)? No satisfactory answer to these questions has been provided by Vijnana-vadins and Vedantins.

Saiva thinkers of the monistic school explored the truth at all levels of turyā and also had a clear vision of the transcendental state called turyātìta. Through their highly refined spiritual practice they discovered the principle of spanda which explained the manifestation of all diversity within the luminous Self-awareness of one monistic absolute Consciousness. They experienced how spanda, which is blissful and playful in character, itself appears as all creation, while manifesting the whole show of this wonderful universal drama. The stir of the infinite joy of the Lord is this spanda. Spanda's essential character is blissful and its final aim is the completely fulfilling realization that one's own nature is

that infinite bliss. Similarly, at the mundane level of human existence, all play has joy as its essential character and joy is the aim of all play. There is much similarity between the two levels. The finite play in mortal existence is merely a reflection of the infinite playfulness of the absolute Consciousness.

Spanda is thus the essential nature of the absolute monistic reality known as Paramaśiva or Parabrahman. It is the divine essence of God. All phenomenal existence has spanda as its source. Spanda, appearing at different levels, governs phenomenal existence. It keeps the universe in motion. It keeps ordinary people bound to transmigratory existence. But when a person realizes its essence, they discover themselves as none other than Almighty God. In this way, spanda is the means for attaining Self-realization, all the highest aims of life, and perfect liberation from all misery.

Chapter 7

TATTVAS IN SAIVISM

The Samkhya philosophy is the oldest school of Indian thought to have developed a comprehensive analysis of all phenomena into different tattvas* or elements. In this chapter we will briefly review the traditional tattvas of the Samkhya system, and then go on to discuss the additional tattvas worked out by the Śaiva philosophy.

Traditionally the tattvas can be described either from their source "down" to the grossest level of phenomenon, or, in the reverse order, from the most gross "up" to the most refined level of the source. We will follow the Samkhya system in the latter order. This philosophy divides gross phenomena into five elements known as the five bhutas: earth, water, fire, air and ether. These five bhutas evolve out of the next subtler level known as the five tanmatras: odor, flavor, light/color, touch, texture, and sound. As is obvious, these subtle elements are the basic objects of the five exterior senses. Collectively, these make up the first ten tattvas known as the "objective elements." The next thirteen tattvas are known in the philosophy as the "instrumental elements." The Samkhyas analyze these into exterior and interior groupings. The exterior instrumental elements are the five organs of action and the five exterior senses, i.e.: reproduction, elimination,

* See outline in glossary under tattvas.

locomotion, handling, and expression; and, smell, taste, sight, touch, and hearing. These are the capacities of our bodily motor-nervous system known as the five organs of action (karmendriyas), and the five organs of perception (jñānedriyas) respectively. The three interior instrumental elements are known as the three antahkarana: mind (manas), ego (ahaṅkāra), and understanding (buddhi). Up to this point we have ten "objective elements" and "thirteen instrumental" elements, or 5+5+5+5+3=23 tattvas.*

The 24th tattva is mūla-prakṛti. It is the source and basic element out of which all these twenty three tattvas grow through a process of outward transformation, and which all of them are absorbed back into through a process of inward transformation. All of these twenty-four tattvas are absolutely insentient in character. Sentience is the basic nature of consciousness which appears in the twenty fifth and last tattva known as puruṣa. This completes the organization of universal phenomena which was developed by the Samkhya school.

Śaivism accepts this analysis as far as it goes, and then

*("Objective" and "instrumental" are words commonly used in these discussions to describe and differentiate between 1) elements that are insentient objects and 2) the acts of knowing and doing that flow from the subject. The mind and the hand would be called a "mental instrument," and a "physical instrument" respectively. For the sake of philosophical discussions a distinction is made between the subject, the act of knowing or doing, and the object. But, in Kashmir Śaivism there is only one pure Subject, Paramasiva, who contains all such distinctions. The subject, object, and processes of connection are all One thing, Consciousness.)

proceeds beyond prakrti and purusa to discover eleven more tattvas, raising their total number to thirty six. The "lower" six of these eleven tattvas are considered integral characteristics of purusa, while the most refined, last five elements are pure tattvas transcending maya, the root of all limitations. Beyond all thirty six tattvas is the basic eternal Reality out of which they all emerge and into which the whole phenomenal universe becomes absorbed at the time of complete dissolution. That is the transcendental absolute Reality which serves as the non-dual substratum of all phenomena and is called Paramaśiva in Śaivite philosophy. It is the equivalent of the Para-brahman found in the Upanisads.

Regardless of the name applied to this absolute source of everything, it is important to remember that this philosophy insists on a complete and pure non-dualism. Everything is one thing, and that one thing is described again and again in the texts as being Consciousness. It is pure, eternal, infinite, and totally free I-consciousness whose essential nature is vibrant creative energy, which we refer to here as the divine essence. The essential character of this infinite Consciousness is described by the principle philosophers of Kashmir Śaivism as a wonderful spiritual stir of blissfulness known as spanda. The blissful stir of spanda causes Absolute Reality to be continuously inclined towards the outward and joyful manifestation of its divine creative energy. This manifestation, which is brought about through the free will of

Paramasiva Himself, results in the appearance of all universal phenomena.

Outward manifestations of the divine creative energy appear in five stages: 1) the creation, 2) the preservation, and, 3) the dissolution of the thirty six tattvas and all the beings living in them, plus the activities of 4) Self-oblivion and 5) Self-recognition of these created beings.

Starting from the source of vibrant Consciousness, the first two tattvas of Śaivism are Śivatattva and Śakti-tattva. It is important to understand at the beginning that these two tattvas are only academic realities and are actually not part of creation. According to the deep yogic experience of the sages of this philosophy, there is no difference between Śivatattva and Śaktitattva. They are both actually one with Paramasiva. They are considered to be two tattvas only for the convenience of philosophical thinking and as a way of clarifying the two aspects of the one absolute reality, Paramasiva. These two aspects are Siva, the transcendental unity, and Śakti, the universal diversity. The changeless, absolute and pure consciousness is Siva, while the natural tendency of Siva towards the outward manifestation of the five divine activities is Sakti. So, even though Siva is Śakti, and Śakti is Śiva, and even though both are merely aspects of the same reality called Paramaśiva, still, these concepts of Sivahood and Saktihood are counted as the first two tattvas. These two tattvas are at the plane of absolute purity and perfect unity.

Below this level there appear four more tattvas of divine creation brought about by Paramasiva Himself. Of this group, the three tattvas known as 3) Sadāśivatattva, 4) Īśvaratattva, and 5) suddha-vidyā-tattva are considered pure, while the last divinely created tattva, 6) māyā is impure.

As we examine these tattvas it is important to remember that all phenomena have an eternal existence in Paramasiva. All phenomena exist within Paramasiva in the form of pure consciousness alone. This Consciousness is also referred to as the Absolute which is completely free and divinely potent. All phenomena lie within the Absolute in the form of its potency, just as a plant lies in a seed in the form of the potency of the seed. It is the playful activity of absolute Consciousness that causes the outward manifestation of phenomena in differentiated form.

So while the Absolute is limitless I-consciousness, the playful activity of Its divine essence manifests phenomena in the form of this-ness or objectivity. The objective manifestation of these phenomena is known as their creation. At the very first step of their creation, these phenomena appear as a single and undiversified this-ness. At this first stage, infinite consciousness develops and holds a unified awareness of "I am this." Even though this initial awareness includes both I-ness and this-ness, I-ness shines predominantly in it and only the faintest tinge of this-ness is manifested. All created beings dwelling at this plane

experience "I am this." These beings are known as mantra-maheśvaras, while the presiding deity of this tattva is called Sadāśiva Bhaṭṭāraka. He is actually Paramaśiva who has descended to this level as the master of its creation. This plane of existence, with Lord Sadāśiva as the master deity, mantra-maheśvaras as his devotees, and "I am this" as their unified awareness, is called Sadāśiva-tattva, the third tattva in the chain of thirty six, and the first one in the process of creation.

At the next step of creation the balance of I-ness and this-ness shifts. The awareness of I-ness is not lost, but this-ness begins to be dominant. Awareness now shines as "This is myself". This plane of existence is known as Īśvara-tattva, the fourth in the series. Created beings at this level are known as mantreśvaras, and the deity presiding over them is called Īśvara-Bhaṭṭāraka.

The vision or understanding of beings in these two tattvas has been described as "diversity in unity" and "unity in diversity." When this vision becomes balanced so that there is equal emphasis on I-ness and this-ness, the śuddha-vidyā tattva comes into being. This is the fifth tattva which is sometimes known as sad-vidyā as well. There are really two levels to this tattva, the initial level just described, where there is a powerful balance between I (aham) and this (idam), and the more evolved level where the further outward manifestation of śuddhavidyā results in an awareness of clear

diversity. This second stage happens without any loss of its purity and divinity. Beings created by the Absolute at this stage of creation develop an awareness as "I am I" and "this is this". They see the objective element of this-ness as separate from the subjective element of I-ness, but simultaneously retain their awareness of the purity, infiniteness, and divine potency of their I-consciousness. Because of this, they are included in the category of pure beings. This stage of clear diversity in śuddhavidyā is known as mahāmāyā. Beings living at this level are called mantras or vidyeśvaras, and the deity presiding over them is known as Anantanātha. He is in fact Īśvara Bhaṭṭāraka, who has descended to this level as the divine administrator of further creation. It should be made clear that mahāmāyā is not a separate tattva, but represents a lower level which is included in the śuddhavidyā-tattva.

Creation up to and including mahāmāyā is recognized as pure because the beings who reside at all these levels do not forget the purity and infiniteness of their I-consciousness, nor do they lose their divine potency. So these first five tattvas are all considered pure and are all created by Paramaśiva Himself, without His delegating authority to any created deity.

There is one final tattva created by the Lord Himself which is considered to be "impure," that is, filled with limitation. This level is called māyā. As the creative energy of Paramaśiva evolves outward into the realm of māyā, it has

two main effects. First, it hides the pure and divine nature of created beings residing in its plane and consequently they forget the purity and infiniteness of their I-consciousness as well as their divine infinite potency. And second, they see every other entity as absolutely different from their finite I-consciousness. All other phenomena are imagined to be mutually different as well. Māyā is thus the plane of absolute Self-oblivion and diversity, and is the abode of finite beings. Under the influence of màya a person loses their state of oneness with divine potency, becoming permeated instead with feelings of imperfection and emptiness which they attempt to fill up with outer objects. In this way they develop passions and desires for objective enjoyments.

The deity who presides over māyā is known as Lord Anantanātha. In the philosophy it is said that he "shakes up" māyà causing it to expand into the next five tattvas. These are known collectively as the five kaňcukas or cloaks that cover the real nature of the knowing subject. They are also sometimes referred to as the elements from kalà to kāla. Maya is itself the greatest of these tattvas of limitation and is sometimes counted as one of the kaňcukas, bringing the total number to six.

Along with māyā, these five kaňcukas penetrate into I-consciousness, limiting the person and their capacities in the following ways. As was said above, màyà causes a person to become filled with desires for events and things to compensate

for their imagined insufficiency. In order to enable beings to fulfill these desires, māyā imparts to them just a little power to achieve a limited amount. This limited capacity to do just a little is called kalā. This is the seventh tattva. Since doing is not possible without knowing, māyā also gives them just a limited capacity to know a certain amount. The finite capacity of beings in māyā to know just a little is the eighth tattva called vidyā. In order to further limit the scope of their doing and knowing, māyā appears in these beings as rāga, or limited interest. Rāgatattva is the ninth level. Because of this quality, beings in māyā are not inclined to pursue the full scope of their innate capabilities or to reach their highest potential. They end up knowing and doing a limited amount and placing a high value on these partial accomplishments. Rāga also limits the various attributes of our understanding (buddhi), causing us to limit our wisdom to simply forming rigid opinions about things, and/or narrowing the scope of our attention and activity to a few particular events and thereby excluding a great deal of our knowledge.

An absolute limitation in the scope of kalā, vidyā, and rāga is caused by niyati, the tenth level. Niyati is the law of nature which establishes the order of succession in the appearance of all phenomena ie, the way in which a seed develops into a tree. Here the law of nature appears as the law of restriction and causation. Whereas absolute consciousness is always present everywhere and is always

interrelated to everything, under the influence of niyati there arises the experience of restricted space and relationship. Here things are seen as having causes and as being sequential.

These four tattvas only limit our field of knowing and doing, but the fifth kañcuka limits our very being as well. This element is the eleventh tattva known as kāla, the sense of time. Our real Self is in fact infinite and in no way conditioned by the concept of time sequence. It is akāla, beyond time sequence. But because of this particular limitation imposed on us by māyā, we feel that "we were, we are, and we shall be." Thus we impose on ourselves the condition of time sequence, and this conditioning is so thorough that we can't think of doing or knowing anything without this sense of time intervening.

Yet what is time? In fact, it is not something that exists independently of a knowing person. Time is simply an imagined concept. A person forms a unified conception of the different events in their environment and of their own different actions, and these get woven chronologically into their sense of ~~who~~ they really ~~are~~. But ~~these are~~ such sequence is merely imagined sequence. a nonsubstantial concept based on ~~the~~ our imagination. These concepts are the sense of time imposed by finite beings on themselves and on their whole environment as well. What results are feelings of: "I was, I am, I shall be. That was, This is. That shall be," and so on. While the actions of finite beings are not necessarily conducted in any definite order, certain events in the environment always occur in definite

system ~~of practice~~ in Kashmir, so much so that Jayaratha ~~counted~~ mentioned it as an independent system along with the systems of Kula and Trika. See (T.A.V. XII.). Such reference to it was partly prevalent even in the time of Abhinavagupta just on account of its popularity of Krama naya with Siva-yogins. Therefore its mention along with Trika and Kula was simply to recognize its importance; otherwise why should have Abhinavagupta discussed it in detail as an important variety of Saktopaya, and how should he have applied the principle of twelve kalis to Sambhavopaya (T.A. III) and the Buddhi-dhyana type of Anavopaya (T.A. IV)? The doctrine of twelve kalis is thus an integral element of all the three main varieties of Trika-yoga?

Shri J.C. Chatterjee, the pioneer research scholar, who brought Kashmir Saivism to light before the modern world, committed a mistake in counting Krama as an independent system of Tantric theology. Research scholars of the

interrelated to everything, under the influence of niyati there arises the experience of restricted space and relationship. Here things are seen as having causes and as being sequential.

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succession. For instance, sunrise, sunset, phases of the Moon, the seasons, the blossoming of different flowers, the ripening of fruits and harvests, all happen in a regular order. Because of kāla, people measure events that have no order with events like these that are marked by a definite order of succession, and this imagined sense of time comes to be imposed on everything.

I-consciousness, having been reduced to utter finitude, becomes the twelfth tattva known as purusa. It is also known as pumstattva, jīva, paśu, anu, etc. All these terms refer to absolutely limited I-consciousness. The object or "this-ness" of I-consciousness becomes the thirteenth level known as prakrti. It is also known as: mūla-prakrti, the basic substance, and pradhāna-tattva, the principal substance. Prakrti is the undiversified source of all the remaining twenty three instrumental and objective tattvas worked out by the Sāṃkhya philosophy. According to Kashmir Śaivism, purusa and prakrti are actually further creations of Lord Anantanātha. Īśvara Bhattāraka descends to prakrti tattva and appears there as Srikanthanātha who shakes the equilibrium of prakrti and transforms it into the final twenty three tattvas.

Kashmir Śaivism has accepted the Samkhya's concept of prakrti as the combination of three gunas (attributes) in their absolute equilibrium. But what are gunas and from where do they emerge? According to the Sāmkhya philosophy, the three gunas are sattva, rajas, and tamas. Sattva is enlightenment

and pleasure, rajas is turbulence and pain, and tamas is ignorance and lethargy. Sattva is light, tamas is heavy, and rajas is mobile. In this way the Samkhyas have explained the nature of the three gunas, but they have not explained their source and why these particular natures arise. All other schools of thought also lack answers to these questions.

The philosopher-sages of Kashmir Śaivism have examined both of these issues and explained them in the following way. Infinite I-consciousness possesses limitless powers to know, to do, and to diversify. These infinite powers are known as jñana, kriyà, and màyà. I-consciousness is a monistic reality - there is no difference between these powers and the entity that possesses them. However, as infinite I-consciousness evolves and appears in finite forms, it loses the nature of unity. As jñana, kriyā, and māyà diversify into the limitations of a finite being, they can no longer be considered the infinite powers of I-consciousness. At the plane of diversity these powers become simple attributes or gunas. Jñana becomes sattva, kriya becomes rajas, and māyā becomes tamas. In this way Śaivism of Kashmir has explained the source of three gunas.

The philosophy explains the nature of the three gunas as they relate to the basic nature of the Absolute. Infinite I-consciousness is all powerful and all blissful awareness. The finite I-consciousness of a person also experiences blissfulness during moments of happiness and clarity. These

experiences of pleasure and illumination are a person's sattva. During deep sleep, or while dazed or intoxicated, the blissfulness of a person's existence does not shine clearly in their awareness. The resulting loss of clarity, the ignorance and lethargy that arise, create a kind of darkness which is tamas. This is an absolute lack of the awareness of Self-bliss. Finally, there are also those occasions when a person has an experience of the existence of his true Self but it is incomplete - is not the way they would like it to be. This is a mixture of blissful and non-blissful Self-awareness. This mixture of sattva and tamas causes turbulence, and consequently pain known as rajas. To give an example of how rajas can arise, imagine a parent, after many years of separation, having a reunion with a beloved child who is lying ill in a hospital. The awareness of the presence of the beloved child is a blissful one, while the awareness of the child's illness is the non-existence of blissfulness. The resulting stir of emotions is the pain and turbulence of rajas.

The three gunas are thus basically the particulars of purusa. He views the objective element, all "this-ness", through the lens of these three attributes, and experiences them in a state of equilibrium. No other school of Indian thought considers the gunas to be particulars of purusa tattva. All of these schools accept the gunas as attributes of prakrti alone. The three gunas have been discussed in this way by Utpaladeva in his Iśvara-pratyabhijñā (IV.i.4-6), and have

also been explained in detail by Abhinavagupta in his commentary on that work. This is another example of how the philosopher-sages of Kashmir Śaivism have clarified and deepened various concepts of Indian Philosophy.

It is important to understand that, according to Kashmir Śaivism, this analysis of all phenomena into thirty six tattvas is not an absolute truth. It has been worked out by the authors of the philosophy as a tool of understanding for the ever active and inquiring mind and as a form for contemplative meditation. Through further analysis, the number of tattvas can be increased to any level. Similarly, through synthesis, they can be decreased down to one tattva alone. In fact this has been done in the Tantraloka, where one can find doctrines of contemplation on fifteen, thirteen, eleven, nine, seven, five, and as few as three tattvas as well. The practitioners of the Trika system use only three tattvas in the process of a quick ~~their~~ sādhanā: śiva, śakti, and nara. Finally, a highly advanced Śivayogin sees only the śiva tattva in the whole of creation. However, since the contemplative practice of tattvādhvādhāranā used in anavopāya includes meditation on all thirty six tattvas, that is the number which is commonly accepted by the Śaivas of both northern and southern India.

tattvādhva-dhāranā

CHAPTER 8

The Saktipata Principle of Saivism

All the Vedic schools of Indian philosophy agree that the basic ignorance of human beings is without any beginning. They maintain that this ignorance has been there from eternity, but that it can be ended by means of correct knowledge. The various schools of Buddhism, Jainism, Vaisnavism and dualistic Saivism also agree with this philosophical principle. The monistic school of Kashmir Saivism however, takes a somewhat different approach. It accepts the eternal existence of only one entity, and that is the Absolute, Paramasiva. Being the only eternal entity, He alone can be really without beginning. Obviously it is impossible to trace or date the beginning of a concept like basic ignorance, but this does not mean that it has no beginning. When each and every worldly, heavenly, or even super-heavenly being is himself a creation and not really beginningless ~~eternal~~, how can the ignorance residing in ~~that being~~ him be such? ~~eternal?~~

The Saiva philosophers of Kashmir deal with this philosophical issue in a unique and interesting manner. Their view is that God is just like a limitless ocean of blissful Consciousness. They have described His will as a surge of bliss through which He manifests His nature, or what we have termed His divine essence. This manifestation of the nature of God appears as the fivefold divine activity of creation, preservation, absorption, obscuration, and revelation.

Everything that is, exists within Him in the form of pure and blissful consciousness. This is often likened to the way that all milk products exist in milk in the form of pure milk. Because it is His basic nature to do so, He wills to appear as the phenomenal world. His unrestrictable, independent, and playful will instantly materializes, appearing in the form of the universe in its phenomenal aspect. God is in no way transformed or changed during this creative process, but simply appears in that form, just as a crystal appears in the different hues reflected in it. In this way He Himself appears as the limited subject and object in countless forms. While appearing in this way, He conceals His divine nature. It is this divine activity of obscuration that marks the beginning of the basic ignorance of the individual being in whose form He starts to appear.

This ignorance grows and evolves in countless ways resulting in the amazing psychic diversity that we encounter in this world. According to Kashmir Saivism, the appearance of ignorance and its subsequent evolution into diversity is considered the first part of the divine play of God. During the second part of this play, He enlightens individual beings and reveals to them their true and divine nature. These souls, having been enlightened by Him, realize that they are one with absolute God. These realized beings see their own Self as everything, and understand that the whole richly diverse universe is actually their own creation, created by

them through their own will. The whole universe becomes, as it were, a show, a play, a drama, or a reflection to such a realized soul.

This kind of revelation cannot come to a person simply through their own individual effort. A person's effort or goal is inherently limited because it can only be devoted to an aim which is already known to the individual. As God's nature cannot be fully known to any individual, it can never become the target of anyone's effort. Just as ignorance is inspired by God, so is revelation inspired by Him, according to the Saivism of Kashmir. This inspiration of divine knowledge is known as His Grace (anugraha) or the "descent" of His power (saktipata). Only those individuals who receive the Lord's saktipata become interested in following the path of correct knowledge.

How do other schools of thought view this concept of saktipata? Saivite philosophers in southern India, all schools of Vaisnavism, and the Visuddhadvaita school of Vallabha all generally agree with this Saivite principle. The Vedantins also accept it, but do not elaborate on it. They place greater emphasis on the individual's effort in studying, understanding, and realizing the essence of the Upanisads. Saktipata, according to some philosophers, depends on individual efforts which result in good actions: eradication of attachments, false knowledge, and worldly propensities (vasanas); purity and steadiness of mind, and the renunciation

of all actions and desires. Others say that God becomes gracious to a being who practices devotion, and is dedicated in worship. Certain philosophers think that God's grace depends on chance. This chance appears sometimes in the form of karma-samya, that is, the co-existence of the ripening of two mutually opposite actions both of which are exactly equal in power and therefore restrict each other from resulting in any karmic fruits. Grace is also thought to result sometimes from contact with a realized soul who reveals Absolute Truth to an aspirant.

Abhinavagupta, the greatest interpreter of the principles of the monistic Saiva philosophy of Kashmir, rejects all these theories in his Malinivijaya-Vartika in the following words:

> "As is being said, the bestowal of the divine grace of the Lord is the result of the causes listed as follows: consumption of attachment, equipotentiality of past deeds; high merits of piety, ripening of impurities, contact with well-wishers, emotional devotion to the Lord, regular service offered to Him, religious theological practice, dissolution of the flair for enjoyments, ripening of right impressions, eradication of incorrect knowledge, renunciation of activities, falling away of passionate longings, and equanimity of mind. But all that is incorrect, because all such things, (being themselves effects), must have their causes which are to be searched out. Besides, these (attributes) are involved in other logical defects like: anavastha, endlessness of argumentation; atiprasanga, unwarranted extension; asambhava, improbability; abhava, non-existence; anyonyasraya, interdependence; nihsreni, classlessness; and cakraka, circular dependence, etc. (M.V.V.I.686-692)."

He goes on to say that devotion itself depends on saktipata:

> "It is His grace that gives rise to such devotion in human beings, through which they, devoting their minds to emotional love for Him, attain the highest perfection (Ibid I.697)."

So basically, saktipata does not depend on any cause other than the gracious and totally free will of the Lord. Abhinavagupta expresses this in the following words of the same work:

a) "Therefore the grace of the Lord does not depend on any external cause (Ibid I-168)."

b) "(The authority of) Lord Siva's unfettered power of grace has therefore been accepted (by philosophers) because the state of (perfect) liberation cannot be attained otherwise, as the arguments put forth by other schools of thought in this regard are of no avail" (Ibid I.695).

c)"Thus it has been said in sastras like the Puranas that the Lord's power of grace is absolutely independent; its dependence shall mean lack of divine essence in Him" (Ibid I.698).

Passages from the Upanisads also are in agreement with this principle of independent saktipata. The Katha Upanisad says:

> "The Self can neither be realized by means of discussions, nor through intelligence, nor through the careful listening to scriptures. The Self can only be realized by a being whom It selects for such purposes, and to him alone does It reveal Its real character"(K.U.I.ii.22).

The Kausitaki Upanisad also says:

> "It is He who directs such beings towards good actions whom He wants to lead above these mundane regions. Then it is He who directs those beings towards bad actions whom He wants to push below"
> (Kau.U.3-9).

There is, however, no doubt that devotion has been highly praised by great philosophers like Utpaladeva. He describes the interdependence of devotion and saktipata in his Sivastotravali in the following words:

> "O Lord, Thou (are) pleased through devotion on our part, and our devotion toward Thee dependeth on Thy pleasure.

> The way in which such interdependence can be justified is known (best) to Thee alone"(S.St.XVI.21).

This can be clarified as follows: A person's original inspiration of devotion for the Lord depends on His grace alone. Then, the devotee's increasingly refined practice of devotion, prompts the Lord to exercise more and more powerful saktipata. This, in turn, increases a person's devotion, and so on. Through this type of interdependence, both grace and devotion attain complete perfection. Utpaladeva has stated this clearly in another section of the same work:

> "A very small fraction of grace (towards me) is present in the Lord, and something looking like devotion is rising in me. When shall these two things grow through mutual integration and attain the desired perfection!"(Ibid 8.1)

According to Utpaladeva, completely perfect devotion is the highest stage of right knowledge and yoga, and is real liberation as well:

> a)"Devotion towards Thee is the highest aspect of pure knowledge as well as the uppermost level of yoga. O Lord! When will my request for that (devotion) become (perfectly) fruitful?"(S.St.9.9)
>
> b)"O Lord! Liberation is the name given only to the perfectly ripened devotion towards Thee. Therefore we, having risen to its initial stage, are heading toward liberation"(Ibid 16-19).

The gradual development of this sort of devotion, culminating in a state of complete perfection, depends on the constant exercise of saktipata by the Lord.

Various philosophical objections have been raised to this understanding of saktipata, particularly that it displays partiality on the part of the Lord. Why should He pick some

souls to be graced, and others to be pushed into bondage? Because Kashmir Saivism is an absolute monism, because the Lord is Himself everyone, whether in bondage or liberation, Saiva philosophers have no apprehension about this issue. Since the whole show of bondage and liberation is merely a reflection brought about by the supreme will of God, and since nothing in the whole universe is in any way different from Him, who is Himself everything, there can be no question of partiality about the way in which He exercises saktipata on Himself. He could only be considered partial to someone if that person were different from Him. To Saiva philosophers the sole cause of bondage and liberation is the free will of the Lord, who is playfully manifesting this whole show in accordance with His unrestrictable will.

One may also wonder why God should indulge at all in this play of bondage and liberation which is so full of pain and misery. Saiva philosophers address this dilemma in two ways. First, they point out that the Lord is in a state of absolute independence and freedom (svātantrya) where the question of 'why' can have no bearing. Second, it is the very nature of God to be constantly engaged in the five divine activities of creation, preservation, dissolution, Self-oblivion, and Self-recognition. According to Abhinavagupta, God, shorn of this independence and the play of these various aspects, would cease to be God.

> "Had the Lord remained confined to His one aspect (of transcendental consciousness) then He would have given up

> being God and being Consciousness, (and would be)just like an insentient substance, eg. an earthen pot" (T.A.III.101).

There is one more objection to this principle of independent saktipata that may be raised. When the interest in liberation and the effort on the path of Self-realization depend only on the gracious will of God, why should people bother at all about their life style? Why shouldn't we eat, drink, and be merry and leave the whole task of liberation to God? Abhinavagupta replies to this in the following manner in his explanation (Vivarana) of the Paratrisika. It is never in the hands of a person either to do or not to do something that is worthy of being done. A person is always bound to do what they are destined to do. We are urged to act a certain way according to our own nature which is bestowed on us by the Lord. The exact words of Abhinavagupta are:

> "If it is so, then what is the use of wrongly taken trouble in activities like collecting scriptures and works, reading them, explaining and discussing them, pondering on them, and so on? This heavy burden should be shaken off. Refuge should be taken in keeping silence. The will of the Lord shall itself carry ashore the person who is to be carried there." The answer to this objection is this: "It is the same gracious will of the Lord which is leading us finally towards such contemplation (or Sastras). Therefore it should not be our motto to eat merrily and sleep soundly with out-stretched legs, without either contemplating ourselves, or taking interest in discussions with worthy people who are blessed with the gracious activity of the Lord which is on a higher plane (than that working within us) and who have consequently developed a wisdom that is skilled in intricate thought" (P.Tr.V.p.126,127).

In The Bhagavad Gita, the final argument used by lord Krishna to enlighten his devotee Arjuna is in complete

agreement with Abhinavagupta's views. The Lord says to Arjuna:

> "O son of Kunti, being bound by your characteristic activity, you shall be destined do that which you do not want to do on account of your delusion"(Bh.G. XVIII.60).

A devoted aspirant, having been blessed by the saktipata of the Lord, has to proceed on the path of Self-realization and consequent Self-liberation. He is destined to attain that highest summit of realization where the graciousness of the Lord and the devotion of his devotee attain complete perfection as described by Utpaladeva in those sections of his Sivastotravali quoted above.

Once it is clearly recognized that the whole interaction of bondage and liberation is simply the Lord's play, then life can be experienced as an amazing drama, and it is always wonderful. Had the Lord been exercising His grace and wrath according to some limited plan for every individual, the universe would have resembled some endless industrial complex, producing sets of different types of people, mostly similar in nature and character, like manufactured goods. But because the universe is the Lord's divine drama, each and every character has its own individuality, free from any sort of repetition that might mar its aesthetic beauty.

The Lord creates the amazing diversity of characters in this divine drama through infinite variations of two of his divine activities - obscuration (nigraha) and revelation (anugraha). As we have said, He brings about the activity of revelation through His saktipata, which He dispenses in

numerous forms. In this way the wondrous quality of this infinite drama is maintained.

Abhinavagupta, in the 13th Chapter of his Tantraloka, has analyzed the nature of the Lord's saktipata into three main types: 1) tivra, intense or swift 2) madhya, moderate, and 3) manda, slow. Each of these has been further analyzed into three sub-types of swift, moderate, and slow which gives rise to nine types of saktipata. The nature of these nine types, as presented by Abhinavagupta in his Tantraloka and Tantrasara, is discussed below, one by one:

1) Intensely-intense (tivra-tivra): An aspirant blessed with this type of saktipata attains spontaneous knowledge of the exact nature of the Self without any help from a worldly preceptor.

Such a person need not perform any rituals, nor practice any yoga to attain this state. Their realization of the highest aspect of the Self is absolutely spontaneous. Having recognized that their real nature is one with the Absolute, they no longer want to associate with the miseries of ordinary people. They become impatient to merge into their purest aspect, to shed off their physical form and become one with the Absolute. This type of liberation is known as videhamukti, or liberation without having a body. Such a devotee even loses interest in jivanmukti, or liberation while one lives in a physical form. The devotees may shed off their body at once or after a little time, but they do not stay for long in this

world. Someone under the effect of the intensely-intense form of saktipata may also stay in their body, but will linger on in a state of complete inaction, insentient like a log of wood. This highest type of Self-realization results in an extraordinary ecstasy that obliterates all interest in anything impure in nature. In this way, tivra-tivra saktipata brings about immediate liberation from all bondage.

2) Moderately-intense (madhya-tivra): This type of saktipata results in a spontaneous realization of the exact nature of the Self without the help of a preceptor's diksa, or a practice in yoga, or studies of sastras. An aspirant develops a spontaneous correct knowledge called intuition (pratibha). It has been said in the sastras that yoginis, who are actually the divine powers of the Lord, personified as mother goddesses, perform the devotee's initiation (diksa) and inspire spontaneous intuition in them. At this point they become a preceptor capable of liberating others at will.

Sometimes certain of these moderately-intense initiates fail to develop a firm belief in the validity of their spontaneous knowledge and consequently they require further support from either Self-contemplation, study of scriptures, or discussions with a preceptor in order to develop a firm realization. This is indispensable especially if they wish to impart their innate, independent enlightenment to others. They also develop supernatural powers called yogasiddhis. Though they are not interested in these powers for their own sake,

they may use them to create a favorable impression and establish confidence and firm faith in the minds of certain worthy disciples. This type of initiate usually develops the understanding that Siva is in all internal and external phenomena. Some of them may also develop powers to apply curses and to grant boons.

The preceptor does not prescribe any practice in yoga for such a disciple, but holds simple verbal discourses with them in order to verify the correctness of their knowledge. The disciple's consciousness of the Self sheds off all limitations of time, space, and individuality. For this group the element of devotion becomes predominant and knowledge takes a secondary position. The effect of moderately-intense saktipata appears in the aspirant in five different ways. 1) They develop an unswerving devotion for Lord Siva. 2) Their mantras attain perfection and fruitfulness. 3) They attain control over all the 36 tattvas. 4) All their activities reach completion and fruitfulness. 5) They become a master of the art of poetry, and attain knowledge of the essence of all the sastras.

3) Weakly-intense (manda-tivra): This type of saktipata leads an aspirant towards a preceptor whose knowledge of the Self is perfect and complete. Such a preceptor cleanses their disciple's inner soul of all impurity through (a) a simple graceful glance, or (b) an exchange of just a few sentences, or (c) a mere touch of their body, or (d) just thinking about

them. In this way the guru liberates the disciple from all bondage without formal initiation in any practice of yoga. Such an aspirant does not develop spontaneous knowledge of Reality, but gets it through the grace of their preceptor. The guru does not require ritual performances, but initiates the devotee by simply willing to do so. The guru then removes all confusion through the example of their own gracious being and through lectures. This process, which requires no rituals or ritual objects, is known as jnana-diksa.

An aspirant of this third type of saktipata attains final liberation in one of the following ways:

(a) They realize that they are the Absolute, actually feel their divine essence while still residing in the physical body, and consider the body to be simply an instrument which they skillfully use to taste the ecstasy of complete Self-realization. They become liberated while still residing in a physical form.

(b) They enjoy ~~the divine powers of divine essence~~ divine authority in the divine administration for a period of time. Then, leaving their physical body, the aspirant merges into complete 'Sivahood.'

(c) Once the aspirant has reached the natural limits of their life span, they have the ability, through a special type of diksa, to shed off the physical body at will. At this time the aspirant realizes their true nature of absolute 'Sivahood,' and after being ~~completely~~ Self-Commanded merged with the Absolute, they attain perfect liberation.

4) Intensely-moderate (tivra-madhya): An aspirant under the influence of this type of saktipata approaches a preceptor of high merit. By the performance of 'putraka-diksa' the guru adopts the disciple as a daughter or son and teaches them about the nature of Absolute Reality. Such an aspirant, though possessing the correct knowledge of reality, does not actually feel the limitlessness, the purity, and the divinity of their own nature. They do not attain Self-realization while residing in their physical body, but only at the time of death.

5) Moderately-moderate (madhya-madhya): An aspirant receiving this type of saktipata develops a longing for the enjoyment of higher siddhis, even though they becomes eagerly desirous to have the realization of their 'Sivahood.' They may attain the desired siddhis during their life time, but realization of 'Sivahood' comes only after death.

6) Weakly-moderate (manda-madhya): This type of saktipata leads a person to a preceptor who establishes them firmly at some higher tattva. The disciple, after leaving their mortal body, attains the enjoyments specific to that tattva through another form of body suited to existence at that higher plane. They attain realization of 'Sivahood' only after leaving that form of body also. Their liberation is thus a sort of krama-moksa, that is, liberation by stages.

7) Intensely-weak (tivra-manda): An aspirant under the influence of this saktipata transcends this physical existence and attains a higher and purer type of existence in some

superior world (loka). This type of aspirant has desires for and attains enjoyments that are greater than in the weakly-moderate category. After the aspirant's passionate desires for the divine powers of that world are completely satisfied and fulfilled, they attain complete realization of 'Sivahood.' This gradual form of liberation is also known as krama-moksa. An intensely-weak aspirant does not require help from a preceptor belonging to the superior world. The worldly guru alone leads them through that world to the attainment of absolute 'Sivahood'.

8) Moderately-weak (madhya-manda): A person being blessed with this type of saktipata, ascends to some superior world which is higher and purer than this physical one. After enjoying the pleasures attainable in that loka, they are once again initiated in Saiva yoga by the presiding deity of that loka, and through the graciousness of that deity, they pass through various stages to finally attain the realization of absolute 'Sivahood.'

9) Weakly-weak (manda-manda): This type of saktipata also results in the attainment of some superior world. There the aspirant experiences the following states: (a) residence in the abode of the Lord of that world (salokya); (b) physical and mental closeness to that Lord (samipya), and (c) partial unity with that Lord (sayujya). After a long time of experiencing the divine enjoyments of that world, the aspirant is finally initiated once again into Siva-Yoga by the master of that

worlds. In this category, complete realization of the absolute 'Sivahood' occurs by stages and takes a long time.

According to the philosophy, each of these nine types of saktipata has been further defined into high, moderate, and low speed, bringing the total number to twenty-seven. These can be further analyzed into various types as well. However, since the above discussed analysis of the major nine types is sufficiently detailed for clear understanding, great authors like Abhinavagupta have not chosen to work out a more detailed approach.

Since every being, regardless of category, is Siva Himself appearing in that form, all gods, super gods, masters of higher worlds (bhuvanas), purer beings in the plane of vidya and the superior authorities ruling there, all are able to exercise their grace on beings who are spiritually below them. In fact, any one who is spiritually advanced, can bestow their grace on a person who is below them in spiritual progress. The saktipata exercised by super gods like Brahma or Visnu, who wield their authority inside the plane of maya, cannot lead to moksa but only to a superior type of bhoga. The form of saktipata exercised by Isvara or Sadasiva, or by various incarnations of them like Anantanatha, Gahanesa, Srikanthanatha, Umapatinatha can lead to the attainment of moksa. However, this saktipata results in a gradual liberation known as kramamukti. Only an intense (tirva) type of saktipata, exercised by God Himself, can result in quick liberation.

CHAPTER 9

Yoga in the Trika System

INTRODUCTION

There were two prevalent systems of yoga in ancient India, one practiced mainly by monks, the other by householders. The yoga practiced by monks developed into two main systems, the Brahmanic school of Patanjali to be practiced according to Brahmanic codes of discipline, and the non-Brahmanic system of Hatha yoga developed by Gorakhanatha and practiced by a wide variety of monks like the Jogins, Oghars, and Peers, who belonged to all castes and creeds. The other prevalent system of yoga was developed by siddhas or perfect beings. It was patronized by great royal saints and practiced mostly by householders. It developed into the Tantric yoga systems of Saivism, Vaisnavism, and, with minor variations, into Buddhism as well. This yoga evolved into various forms including the Kundalini yoga of Saivism in the South, the Pancaratra system of the Vaisnavas, and the Vajrayana system of Buddhism which is still practiced in the form of Lamaism in Tibet and Mongolia.

The Tantric yoga of Abhinavagupta is significantly different from all of these systems. It is known as the Trika yoga of Kashmir Saivism. Its doctrines originally lay scattered in Trika texts like the Malini-tantra, the Siddha-tantra, and the Svacchanda-tantra. Some of its doctrines were contained in various ancient monistic Saiva texts like the

Rudrayamala, which contains two chapters of particular importance to this system: the Vijnanabhairava and the Paratrisika. Trika yoga was prevalent among traditional lines of Saiva saints in Kashmir, and its truths found expression in ancient works like the Sivasutra and the Spanda Karika. Ancient teachers of Kashmir Saivism both practiced this yoga and made it popular with spiritual aspirants in Kashmir. The most prominent teachers were philosopher-sages like Vasugupta, Kallata, Somananda, and Utpaladeva, all of whom flourished in the ninth century A.D. Sivananda, the originator of the kalinaya practice of Trika yoga, belongs to the 8th century A.D.

The whole Trika yoga system was organized at the end of the 10th century by Abhinavagupta, who collected its doctrines, and then arranged, analyzed, and systematized them extensively in several of his important works. He is thus the builder of the academic aspect of Trika yoga. His Tantraloka is a unique philosophical and theological treatise dealing with the fundamentals of Saiva non-dualism. This work also covers most of the central practices of Trika yoga as well as the ritualistic traditions that support it. Abhinavagupta's Tantrasara is a prose summary of his own Tantraloka, but is more clearly expressed than the original work. Tantra-vata-dhanika is a still shorter version of Tantrasara, but it appears to be the work of some other Abhinavagupta, most probably his cousin Abhinava, who is referred to in the last

chapter of the Tantraloka. Other important works on Trika yoga by Abhinavagupta are the Malini-vijaya-vartika and the Paratrisika-vivarana. His Purvapancika on the Malini Tantra and the Kramakeli on Siddhanatha's Kramastotra were also of great importance, but have unfortunately been lost. Doctrines on Trika yoga also find expression in some of his religio-philosophic lyrics like Anubhavanivedana-stotra, Bhairavastotra, Anuttarastika, and Kramastotra.

The Trika yoga philosophy which Abhinavagupta organized is also a Tantric system based on the Saiva Agamas. However Trika yoga is a monistic system with a pragmatic approach. It is also more refined and sophisticated than the Kundalini yoga of the South, which though included in Trika yoga, is assigned a comparatively lower position in the system.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

Looking at the two systems of yoga prevalent in ancient India reveals some interesting contrasts with Abhinavagupta's school. Patanjali's system of yoga emphasizes repressing the emotions and instincts, forcibly controlling the mind, depriving the senses and organs, and observing other strict disciplines in day to day life. A form of meditation that calls for continuous concentration on imagined objects and also on certain energy centers in the body is the most important practice prescribed in Patanjali's school. This approach can really be practiced properly only by ascetics living in a hermitage and working under the constant guidance and

supervision of a skilled preceptor. The Hatha yoga system of Gorakhanatha adds physical practices which can result in considerable torture to one's senses, organs, and whole physical system. The Tantric yoga of the South has adopted the methods of Patanjali and added the practice of rousing the kundalini and directing it upwards through the spinal nerve to the crown of the head. Kundalini yoga is an element in the system of Gorakhanatha as well. Teachers in the South did not develop a separate system based on the Saiva doctrines contained in the agamas, but adopted and revised the already prevalent system of Patanjali.

The Tantric yoga of Abhinavagupta is a particularly agamic system. It is free from all stringent restrictions and repressive discipline. It discourages torturing the body and mind, or starving the senses. Even methods of breath control (pranayama) which cause physical discomfort, have been prohibited by Abhinavagupta who says in his Tantraloka: "Breath control should not be practiced if it means torture to the body" (TA.IV.19).

Calling on the authority of his greatest preceptor, Sambhunatha, Abhinavagupta clearly states that the senses can only give up their fascination with worldly enjoyments through a spontaneous indifference arising from the blissful experiences that yoga elicits. In other words, once a practitioner has discovered the inner bliss of the Self, all the common sense pleasures will seem inadequate by comparison,

and will therefore no longer be a temptation. He adds that the senses are liable to adverse reactions if these are forcibly controlled. He puts it this way in his Malini-vijaya-vatika:

> "It is so because my revered preceptor has thus advised many times during his teachings, 'The emotional functions of one's senses and organs calm themselves through spontaneous indifference (towards their objects when these become tasteless for them). But, on the other hand, these become liable to adverse reactions as long as they are forcibly repressed'" (MVV.II.111,112).

Regarding the forcible repression and control of the mind, Abhinavagupta says in the same work that a repressed mind, just like a repressed steed, attempts to break loose onto numerous uneven paths, if driven forcibly through an unfamiliar and disagreeable course:

> "The mind of those aspirants who force it to give up its familiar path, runs astray, just like a steed, on millions of wrong paths" (Ibid.ii.109).

Abhinavagupta does not prescribe a hermit's life for a Sivayogin, who is free to live without restrictions, to remain in the household, and to participate in pleasures of the senses and the mind within the limits of the currently acceptable social standards. In other words, one is free to live a normal life and at the same time to pursue some method of Trika yoga. As soon as the seeker's practice in yoga yields the experience of Self-bliss, worldly enjoyments automatically lose their power and fascination, and one's senses develop a spontaneous indifference, known as anadara-virakti, to former pleasures. Once a person has become an expert practitioner in the experience of Self-bliss, they are able to move freely through

worldly enjoyments without any fear of spiritual pollution. Such enjoyments can actually serve to further illumine the extraordinary experience of Self-bliss. As Abhinavagupta explains:

> "The mind (of a Sivayogin) does not become wet (or stained) from within, just like the rind of a dried gourd which has no opening, even if it dives deep into the water of sensual pleasures" (MVV.I.108).

While systematizing the scattered scriptural doctrines of Trika yoga, Abhinavagupta focuses only on those practices which are aimed at the attainment of Self-realization (moksa). He leaves out numerous other practices which yield supernatural psycho-physical powers, because he considers all of that to be in the realm of bhoga (enjoyment). Among the various practices which lead to Self-realization, he chooses only the most prominent ones and leaves the correct classification of the rest to the discretion of the reader. Even with his careful distillation of the scriptural works, there end up being about six thousand verses (karikas) in his Tantraloka.

Abhinavagupta introduces the doctrines of Trika yoga beginning with the most advanced approach, and then presents continuously easier methods one by one in descending order. This is another example of his particular approach to yoga. His intention is to make the best and the quickest method of yoga immediately available to an aspirant. If they succeed at the highest level, they need not go through the long chain of lower stages. However, if an aspirant feels that they cannot handle the most advanced path successfully, they are free to

move along a more structured path, and choose any of the methods which accommodate their psychophysical capacity. The important point is that no one should take it for granted that they are not fit for the most advanced method. Why should a person resort to a bullock-cart when an airplane is at their disposal? If, however, a person is unable to handle the superior vehicle successfully, they can choose some other more appropriate form of transportation.

In Chapter 8 we discussed the importance of grace in Self-realization. While grace is of primary importance if one is to rise to the highest level, still, it is helpful to have some theoretical knowledge of the philosophy. Therefore Abhinavagupta makes a point of discussing the fundamentals of Saiva monism in his works on Trika Yoga.

One of the important characteristics of Abhinavagupta's yoga is the teaching that a yogin must maintain a non-dualistic outlook throughout the whole process, from the very first initiation all the way through to the most advanced practice of yoga. This outlook is to be maintained even during idol worship, linga worship, fire worship, oblation, repetition of mystic syllables, etc. Another characteristic of his yoga is the importance of a highly developed devotional attitude toward the Lord. There are two advantages to this approach. It protects a practitioner from the degenerative forces of God known as ghoratari saktis (see glossary), and helps in assimilating the results of yogic practices so that whatever

spiritual powers arise will not be misused.

DEFINITION

According to the Trika system, yoga is that theological practice which helps in attaining the realization of absolute unity between the practitioner and Absolute Reality, that is, between the yogin and God. As it says in the Malini-tantra:

> "The unity of one (a finite being) with another (Almighty God) is called Yoga* by Sivayogins" (MVT.IV.4).

A practitioner of Trika yoga is advised to realize their forgotten true nature and to recognize themselves as none other than the Absolute, Paramasiva. This realization is said to be readily attainable through Trika yoga, when aided by both an intense devotion for the Lord and by the correct theoretical knowledge of the pantheistic absolutism of Saiva monism. Theoretical knowledge removes the yogin's mental confusion and misconceptions about Reality, and devotion refines their heart so that it becomes capable of actually feeling and experiencing the truth of Saiva monism. The yoga of Abhinavagupta is thus a integral process of developing both the head and the heart. People with no mental clarity cannot understand the truth, while those without heart cannot digest it.

By contrast, Patanjali starts the teachings of yoga from the lowest level, and intends to carry a practitioner, step by step, to that system's highest experience known as nirbija samadhi. In this state a person's finite self-consciousness is

* The word yoga is derived from [the root] yugir = yoga and not from [the root] yuj = smadhau (translate), as asserted in the Yoga-sutra-bhasya.

totally stilled and undistracted by objects. One's consciousness simply shines by itself and remains motionless like the flame of a lamp burning in a place free from blowing wind. There is no knowing and no doing in such a state of mind. But a yogin in this kind of samadhi does not have any awareness of the potency of their divine essence, nor do they appreciate their infinity. In his Isvara-pratyabhijna-vimarsini, Abhinavagupta considers this form of samadhi to be one of various types of susupti.

> "The sleeping state is the result of total non-recognition of the existence of one's body, etc. It is short lived and is, on that account, different (from pralaya, the phenomenal dissolution). It is sleep when caused by exhaustion, is swoon if brought about by some defect in some element in the body, is intoxication or madness when caused by some edible material, and is known as samadhi when brought about by one's own free will. These are its varieties" (~~IPV.III.2-13~~. ~~Bh.vol~~ (I.P.V. Bh. vol II. p.265)

He advises an aspirant to rise above susupti into the higher levels of the fourth psychic state called turya, the state of spontaneous revelation of the divine nature of the Self.

A special and very important characteristic of Trika yoga, which is not found in other systems, is its doctrine of "possession" (samavesa). In samavesa a practitioner is suddenly infused and possessed with Sivahood, and feels themselves to be omniscient and omnipotent. This is not the kind of possession or haunting which occurs when the power that haunts and the person who is haunted are different. Rather, a yogin in samavesa enters a state of unity, and their limited individual personality gets expanded into universal I-

consciousness which they feel to be divinely potent in all respects. Samavesa has been defined as the immersion of the dependence of a dependent consciousness into the independence of the Independent Consciousness (TA.I.73). It is actually the sudden and direct intuitional realization of one's Divine Essence.

Sufficient practice in samavesa results in a state of jivanmukti (liberation in this very life) in which a yogin develops supernatural divine powers (siddhis). A jivanmukta can use these divine powers simply by willing them to be (IPV. IV.i.15), though such a refined individual would most probably avoid meddling with the natural order, or in matters of divine administration which are the province of a long hierarchy of male and female deities at different levels of authority. This kind of yogic attainment is not considered to be an obstacle on the path of final liberation. Rather, it is said to be helpful, as it removes any lingering doubt about the divine nature of the Self, and develops a firm faith in the eventual attainment of absolute unity with Paramasiva when the individual dies (TA.XII.183-185). Further, these abilities help create faith and confidence in the mind of worthy disciples who feel that the preceptor, being liberated, can liberate others as well.

Samavesa can be attained through all the various levels of Trika yoga. It is one of the highest states that is available at beginning as well as advanced levels. However when a state

of samavesa comes through a higher level of yoga it is considered to be superior because it reveals a more elevated aspect of one's Divine Essence. Because of the various levels at which samavesa can be experienced, the philosophy recognizes as many as fifty varieties.

Abhinavagupta analyzes Trika yoga into three main categories known as sambhava, sakta, and anava. Anava yoga has been further analyzed into dhyana, uccara, karana, and sthanakalpana. Finally, sthanakalpana has been analyzed still further into six paths of objective meditation on external elements known as sadadhvan. All these will be discussed briefly in the following pages.

SAMBHAVA YOGA

A practice in the direct realization of the pure and divine nature of the Self is known as śāmbhava yoga or śāmbhava-upāya. In this highest form of practice, the mind's tendency to think and understand calms down. It stands still, and loses itself in the vibrant glow of pure I-consciousness. Then the aspirant begins to experience their Self-bliss, and with practice, develop a clear intuitional realization of their divine nature. Śāmbhava yoga is to be conducted without pressure and strain. The mind[1] should be relaxed and rested. It is to be gently tamed rather than forced to stop its activities. The practitioner is supposed to keep a subtle form of inner awareness on the mind so that the futility of its restlessness can be fully appreciated. This subtle form of

[1] – Manas the objective thinking faculty is meant here by the word mind. The faculty of objective thinking

witness consciousness eventually tames the mind and the ego's wild tendencies to defend itself. All activities of imagination, contemplation, and ideation are naturally given up. Pure I-consciousness shines clearly in the resulting stillness, and the Self intuitively realizes and recognizes Itself without any help from the mind or understanding capacity. This practice results in the direct realization of one's Divine Essence through śāmbhava samāveśa, and the consequent liberation of the practitioner from all bondage. Through the regular practice of this samāveśa, the practitioner becomes a jīvanmukta and develops the above mentioned divine powers.

An intense devotion for God and the correct understanding of one's real nature, are two essential aids in this direct realization of the Absolute Reality. As we have said, an aspirant who does not have the correct theoretical knowledge of the truth may not be able to free their understanding from the mental habits of the limited individual (age-old confusions created by maya) and because of this may not succeed in attaining final liberation (TA.I.48-49). What is more, a person is liable to enter into that state of absolute dreamless sleep, known as apavedya-susupti, mistake it for the final goal of life, and get stuck there for the rest of their existence (TA.VI.152). Through the binding forces of the Lord, devotion allows a practitioner to overcome all obstacles that arise on the path to liberation. Devotion enables a person to

actually feel and relish the truth realized through the practice of this yoga, and because of devotion they will not fall prey to any temptation to misuse the supernatural powers that often develop automatically in the practice of śāmbhavoyoga.

The Zen Yoga of Japanese Buddhism, though resembling śāmbhava in some respects, leads a practitioner towards a state of nihilistic tranquility. This happens because the Buddhist practitioner avoids devotion and all concepts of theism, and through practice in that system's beliefs, develops a concept of nihilism which deeply permeates his unconscious mind. In this way, Buddhist practice leads to the level of pralayākala. This is also the case with the transcendental meditation school of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi which also takes a practitioner into the state of dreamless sleep. This does not happen to a Śivayogin because the correct theoretical knowledge allows them to aim for more refined states of enlightenment.

This highest form of śāmbhava yoga has not been discussed in detail by Abhinavagupta because of its esoteric character. He has hinted at some aspects of this practice in the second chapter of his Tantrāloka and Tantrasāra, where he discusses the ultimate practice known as anupaya yoga, a yoga without any means. When śāmbhava becomes perfectly ripened, it attains the position of anupāya. A long verse in his Anubhava-nivedana-stotra (ANS 2) describes the essence of śāmbhava yoga as do the first two verses of the Anuttarastika. (AAS.1,2)

Though not a great deal of information about this form of yoga is available, we can find traces of it in India down through many centuries. There is a traditional posture connected to this yoga known as sāmbhavī-mudrā. While it is helpful in the beginning, this mudrā is not required after attaining proficiency in the practice. We know that the tradition of using sāmbhavī-mudrā with this yoga has been prevalent in India for millenniums centuries, because historians have identified this mudrā in the eyes of the bust of a yogin found at Mohenjodaro.

This yogic form of direct realization, aided by the mudrā, has been discussed at length in the sixth chapter of the Bhagavadgītā. The same yoga and mudra have also been depicted in the poetry of Kalidasa, in the third canto of his Kumārasambhava (Kashmir Saivism (III. 44-50). Yajnavalkya's Smrti alludes briefly to it.* (III — 195 to 201) * It has also found expression in certain vacanas of the Virasaiva saints of Karnataka. Ācharya Amṛtavāgbhava, a Śaiva philosopher of the present age, has recently discussed it in his Siddhamahārahasya (SMR.91,92).

There are two types of śambhava yoga which involve the ancient Indian science of grammar. This includes a highly technical approach to the Sanskrit alphabet and the use of sound in spiritual practice. Mātrkā yoga has been discussed in some detail by Abhinavagupta in his Tantrāloka, Tantrasāra, and Parātrīśika-vivaraṇa. In this type of sambhava yoga the yogin practices an intuitive kind of visualization in which the

* It has been discussed in some detail in a dialogue between Yajnavalkya and Gargi, quoted by Sankaracarya in his commentary on Svetasvatara Upanisad from some unknown text.

whole world is experienced as merely a reflection of their own divine powers. All phenomena are imagined to be shining within oneself by virtue of one's own playful divine will. A practitioner of the mātrka form of sambhava yoga, visualizes their own divine powers shining in the form of the sixteen vowels of the Indian alphabet, and sees them reflected in the form of all the phenomenal elements from earth to sakti, and finally shining as the consonants from 'ka' to 'kṣa.' All this should happen mystically without any interference from either mental conceptions or the conventional relationships that exist between the words and their meanings. A practitioner of mātrkà yoga intuitively realizes that all creation has risen from within them, is reflected in them, and is totally non-different from their own true Self (TA, III-280).

The second variety of this type of śāmbhava yoga is known as mālini yoga. In this form, the same general practice is involved, except that letters are arranged haphazardly, with vowels and consonants mixed together in random order, starting from 'na' and ending in 'pha.' This extremely mystical practice of śāmbhava, discussed at length in Paratrīśikā-vivarana, is quicker in results and yields both bhoga and moksa simultaneously (PTV.149,154).

There are still other types of śāmbhava where a yogin, after having thoroughly sharpened the power of their attentiveness (avadhāna), turns this highly focused awareness onto their blissful consciousness in order to catch hold of

this psychic state and remain there. This experience of Self-bliss is actually available to anyone in many different situations. For example, every persons's pure I-consciousness shines clearly through its own brilliance for a moment in situations where there is some powerful emotion like anger, joy, astonishment, etc. (SK.22), or where there is some delightful experience or perception (SD.I-9,11), or in between two mental ideas (SK.38), or between the waking and dreaming states. A super-vigilant practitioner, possessing a very sharp attentiveness, realizes the inner nature of pure Consciousness at such junctures. Then, catching hold of it with their one-pointed awareness, they try to remain firmly established for some time in that state of Self-revelation. With time and practice, these experiences of the Self last longer, and increasingly more subtle levels of the experience become impressed ever more deeply on the sub-conscious mind. Finally, this experience of the Self becomes the essential nature of the practitioner.

These various types of śāmbhava yoga which were taught in philosophical works like the Spandakārikā, have been discussed by Abhinavagupta in his Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vivṛtti-vimarśinī where he quotes many couplets from the Kārikā of Bhaṭṭa Kallaṭa. There seems to have been an understanding and agreement among the sage-philosophers in this tradition about the policy to be used in writing about these most esoteric practices. While they were not kept absolutely secret, neither

were they ever fully or clearly described in a single text. Abhinavagupta received these instructions from of his greatest preceptor, Sambhunatha. As he says in his Tantrasāra:

> "Our revered preceptor has said that a doctrine which is extremely secret in nature, should neither be clarified in a single context, nor should it be kept totally secret" (TS.31).

In summary, no element of mental contemplation or ideation should enter into the practice of any type of śāmbhava yoga. Because it is to be conducted only through one's willpower, without indulging in any form of knowing or doing, it is called "iccha yoga," the the yoga of simply willing. Complete perfection and regular practice in śāmbhava-yoga reveals the secrets and yields the results of all the lower types of Trika yoga.

ŚĀKTA YOGA

An aspirant who is unable to grasp the subtleties of śāmbhava and progress with this method should then turn to the next lower stage of śākta yoga, the yoga of Self-contemplation. In this practice one uses the mind and imagination to constantly contemplate the real nature of the Self as taught in the philosophy of Śaiva monism. A person is supposed to think repeatedly that they are everything and yet they are also beyond everything. All creation is one's own play. It is the manifestation of one's own divine powers, and is created through one's own free Self-will. A person is to imagine themselves as omniscient and omnipotent pure consciousness (~~ST~~. TS, P. ? 21). Constant practice of this form of Self-contemplation

carries the impression of these truths deep into both one's conscious and sub-conscious mind. With time and practice one comes to experience the real Self as one's essential nature. It no longer seems to be simply an imagined concept superimposed on oneself by the mind. Having developed a firm belief in the divinity, infiniteness, and purity of their real nature, a person is able to wash away past impressions of their limitations, attains a sakta samavesa of Absolute Reality, and develops the ability to practice sambhava yoga which is the only direct means of realizing the divine nature of the Self in its highest aspect. In fact, all types of Saiva yoga have to rise to the level of sambhava in order to yield this highest goal of life.

To clarify, sakta is a practice in "pure ideation" (suddha-vikalpa), the yoga of Self-contemplation, imagination, ideation, meditation, etc., while sambhava is a practice in "non-ideational" (nirvikalpa) realization, a yoga free from all conceptual knowing or gross word images. Because sakta yoga is a practice in correct conceptual knowing, and the practice of mental knowing dominates, it is also called jñāna yoga.

The nididhyasana practice of the Vedanta school is similar to the sakta yoga of Saivism. However, the post-Samkara Vedantins have increasingly stressed the importance of the philosophical theories of vivarta, while ignoring the practical aspects of the theology as taught by the ancient sages. Due to extensive interaction with Buddhist logicians

through the years, the Vedantins copied and assimilated a great deal from Buddhism, and slowly drifted towards the nihilistic position of Buddhism. They ignored the actual practice of Sankara's Vedanta to such extent that most of them today are not even aware of the existence of some very important tantric works on Vedanta like (i) the Vidyaratna-sutra by Gaudapada, (ii) the Prapancasara Tantra by Sankara, (iii) the Commentary on it by Padmapada, (iv) the tenth century Srividyarnava-Tantra by Vidyaranya, and so on. Because of this drifting away from the practical aspects of Vedanta, many of them have come to doubt the validity of Sankara's authorship of Saudaryalahari. One of these scholars even tried to prove that Sankaradeva, a Saiva-siddhantin of the Tamil region, had been the author of Saundaryalahari. These scholars apparently don't understand that the sophisticated theological doctrines contained in Saundaryalahari, are absolutely foreign to the simple doctrines of Kriyacarya, the yoga of Saiva-siddhanta.

Disciples of J. Krishnamurty and certain logicians from the West are inclined to criticize sakta yoga as being a practice in self-hypnotism. It is true that its method of practice seems to be very much like hypnotism, but in reality it is far more profound. A hypnotized person is made to forget their individual notions and to adopt new ones in accordance with the will of the hypnotizer. Whether the person becomes stronger, healthier, and wiser, depends of course on the quality of the hypnotizer (or the material being used), and

what they are attempting to do with their power. There is always the danger that one set of illusions may simply be substituted for another. But according to this philosophy we are all already hypnotized by the effects of maya, by thoughts of our own limitations and inadequacies, and the practice of sakta yoga, as discussed above, helps a yogin wash away the hypnotic effects of maya by means of deepening the impressions of vidya, the correct knowledge. Sakta yoga, impresses on us our infinity, eternity, divinity, potency, etc., and dispels from us the false limiting impressions caused by maya. This is more a process of dehypnotizing, as it removes the hypnotic effect of our limitations (maya), and brings us back to our real and essential nature.

There are various other names associated with this practice of yoga. Sakta has been defined as a practice in "refining ideation" (vikalpana-samskara), that is, a process of bringing about gradual perfection in the correct conceptual knowledge of a person (TA.IV.2,3). A sakta yogin has to impress on themself two aspects of their real nature: pure transcendental unity and universal divinity (TS.21). This is to be accomplished through several types of deep and constant imaginative contemplation known symbolically as sacrifice (yaga),oblation (homa), repetition (japa), vow (vrata), union (yoga), and no on. These are all metaphysical in character. Another name given to sakta yoga is sattarka (Ibid 23), the yoga of correct reasoning. Sattarka is that reasoning which is

not based on any of the objective experiences of ordinary people still deluded by maya, nor on the conventions and arguments set forth by them. It is a logic inspired by the direct realization of the Self by the Self, a logic started by perfect beings or siddhas. Still another name for this is bhāvanā. The root "bhū" means to exist, and the word "bhāvanā" means to bring into existence. Sakta yoga is a bhavana that brings into existence the correct understanding of that truth which maya, with the help of imposed forgetfulness, had pushed back into the field of non-existence (Ibid). This Trika yoga bhavana should not be confused either with the bhavana that appears in the philosophical texts of the Mimamsa and Nyaya schools.

There is a special type of sakta yoga known as Kālīnaya. It was originated by one Sivanandanatha about whom we know very little. He imparted it to his three female disciples named Keyuravati, Kalyanika, and Madanika. We know that Govindaraja learnt it from Keyuravati and then imparted it to the great Saiva philosopher Somananda. Kalinaya reached Jayaratha through a long line of disciples. Madanika taught it to Bhanuka, alias Cakrabhanu. It reached Abhinavagupta through the line of Ujjata, Udbhata, etc. Erakanatha, the disciple of Kalyanika, engaged himself in attaining supernatural powers and did not initiate any disciple in the path. This information about the origin and spread of kalinaya has been provided by Jayaratha in his commentary on Tantraloka (III.192-203). He

bases the information on the Kramakeli by Abhinavagupta and quotes a long passage from it (TA.III.192,193). Passages in the Kashmira-apabhramsa, quoted by Abhinavagupta in his Tantrasara and Paratrimsika-vivarana, may have been drawn from the sayings or works of the above mentioned three female preceptors. These three highly respected yoginis may have preferred to teach in the language of the common people, as did Lallesvari in the fourteenth century A.D. Sivananda, being the great grand teacher of Somananda, may have flourished sometime in the 8th century A.D. Exact dating is difficult because these yogins tended to live long lives so that their time cannot be strictly calculated at the rate of twenty-five years per generation.

The term Kalinaya can be understood as follows. Naya can be thought of as a doctrine, and Kali in Kashmir Saivism is a name given to the power of the Absolute God. This power is called Kali because it conducts kalanā, the manifestation of the divine activities of God. Kalanā is different from and should not be confused with kalpana. Kalpana is imagination conducted in one's own mind, while kalanā is a kind of transmutation brought about by the divine essence of God (TA.IV.172-176). It is the outward manifestation of inwardly existent phenomenon.

Kalinaya is practiced in the following manner. In sakta Yoga Kali is visualized in four aspects. It conducts all the divine functions in the fields of (1) absolute unity, (2) unity

in diversity, and (3) complete diversity. While these are its three main aspects, there is a fourth, (4) the all-pervading aspect. Each of these aspects of Kali is supposed to be contemplated upon as it relates to the divine activities of creation, preservation, and absorption. (An example with creation would be: 1) the absolute unity of creation 2) the absolute diversity of creation 3) the unity in diversity of creation 4) the all pervading aspect of creation, and likewise with preservation and absorption.) In this way the number of kalis is raised to twelve. These kalis constitute sakti-cakra, or the wheel of the divine powers of God (TS.28). These kalis, personified as goddesses, have been eulogized in Siddhanatha's Kramastotra, certain stotras of Abhinavagupta, the Cidgagana-candrika of Srivatsa (Kalidasa), and a scriptural work named Pancasatika, quoted by Jayaratha. All the poetic descriptions of kalis found in these works are merely symbolic in character, because the Kali of Kashmir Saivism is the abstract divine power of God and not some deity with a subtle divine form, as is the Kali in Durga-sapta-sati.

A practitioner of sakta yoga, practicing kalinaya, has to imagine themself to be the master of the wheel of divine powers. They have to visualize the divine role of these powers with respect to all of phenomenal existence appearing as the trinity of subject, object, and the intermediate means of knowing, called respectively: pramatr, prameya, and pramana. The practitioner visualizes this trinity in the twelve

varieties appearing in creation, preservation, dissolution, and absolute position. Then they imagine themselves as having assimilated all these phenomenal varieties, one by one, into their own Self through their twelve divine powers visualized as the twelve kalis absorbing them. Through this practice a person has to impress upon themself their complete mastery of the twelve aspects of the divine essence. This highly complex and abstract worship of kali in its many forms, which employs this special kind of contemplative imagination, and which is practiced through a clear conviction that everything is One - a pure non-dualism, is significantly different from the ritualistic Kali-worship prevalent in Bengal*. *(footnote explaining this worship of the goddess form) This is true even though both forms of kali worship are Tantric in origin and character.

When a yogin perfects the practice of sakta yoga, their practice automatically attains the status and character of sambhava yoga. According to the philosophy, the sambhava and sakta methods of yoga are meant only for those aspirants whom Lord Siva has blessed with divine grace. Only these special devotees find the intense interest and quickly attain success in the practice of these two superior types of yoga. Sambhava is also known as abhedopaya, the monistic means of salvation, and sakta is called bhedabhedopaya, the mono-dualistic means (TA.I.230).

ANAVA YOGA

Anava yoga is known as bhedopaya, the means which is workable at the level of diversity. Its various forms are meant for aspirants who are not capable of directly adopting the practice of the two higher types of yoga. In Sanskrit, anu is the name given to a finite being, an ordinary person bound by their limitations, and anava is the form of yoga which is useful to these beings living in the field of maya (Ibid 221). To further clarify these three yogas, anava is the name given to objective meditation, while both sakta and sambhava are subjective in character. The exact nature of the subject is to be realized directly through sambhava, while it is to be contemplated upon through the subjective imagination in sakta. In anava yoga the focus changes from the subject to the object. A practitioner has to meditate upon certain objects and has to contemplate their essential nature as described in the philosophy of Saiva non-dualism. All these objects are to be seen as nothing other than the Absolute. Since meditation is an action which demands considerable mental effort on the part of the yogin, and since this effort becomes more predominant in anava yoga than the element of knowing (jnana yoga), anava is also known as kriya yoga, the yoga of action.

In anava yoga there are two categories of objects to be meditated upon, e.g., those lying inside one's self (grahya) and those existing in the external world (bahya). All of these meditative objects are ranked according to merit depending on

their distance from the subject. Meditation on the object nearest to the subject is considered the highest type of anava yoga while that conducted on the farthest away object is considered the lowest in merit. Buddhi, the understanding capacity, prana, the life force, deha, the physical form, and dhyani, the sound of breathing, are the grahya objects arranged in the descending order of their merit (TS.43). These constitute the four types of internal objects for meditation in anava yoga. The fifth type is called bahya, the external objects, which are time and space. Time and space are each considered in three aspects which causes bahya yoga to have six subvarieties called sadadhvan, or the six paths of meditation on external objects. All these are to be discussed briefly in the following pages.

Dhyāna-yoga

Anava yoga, when practiced with contemplative meditation on buddhi, is called dhyāna yoga or buddhi yoga. This is completely different from the dhyāna yoga of Patanjali. A practitioner has to imagine the trinity of knowing subject (parmatr), knowable object (prameya), and the means of knowing (pramāna) as one unitary whole identical with their own I-consciousness. Then they have to visualize it as a radiantly shining and burning fire of consciousness, encircled by the flames of the wheel of divine powers stationed in their heart. Next it is to be visualized as proceeding out through any of the body's orifices like the eye, ears, nose, etc., and falling

on objects coming within its range, one by one. The practitioner, employing their deepest powers of imagination, further visualizes it as creating, sustaining, absorbing, separating and assimilating the objects concerned as fire assimilates fuel. These activities of buddhi are imagined to be the divine activities of God appearing in the form of the practitioner. A regular practice in this contemplative meditation on the functions of one's own understanding capacity, will thoroughly impress on the practitioner their true nature as the Divine Essence (Ibid 36,37). They will then attain an anava samavesa of Śivahood, and become worthy of practicing śākta yoga as well.

Uccāra-Yoga

Next in proximity to the subject is the power of animation called prāna. Prana's functions vary depending on whether a person is awake, asleep, in a transcendental state, and so on. The elimination and assimilation of objects through breathing, speaking, thinking, working, understanding, etc., constitute the functions of animation in the waking and dreaming states, because prāna is the function in the waking state and apana is the function in the dreaming state (IPV.III.ii.19)(BH.II.271,273).

In the more interior state known as dreamless sleep, both prana and apana become dissolved into a unitary function known as samana (Bh.II.273). It is experienced as an inner vibration.

The fourth function of animation is known as udāna. It is

the activity of intuitive revelation of the real nature of the Self and is experienced vividly by yogins in the turyā state. Ordinary people do not usually have experiences of intuitive revelation. Yogins feel it as a sensation moving through the spinal column. All ordinary thinking becomes quieted during intuitive revelation and is replaced by a non-conceptual Self-realization which is experienced as an inner glow or radiance (Ibid.275).

The fifth function of animation is known as vyāna. It has been described as the total brilliance of the limitless Subject shining infinitely in the transcendental state of turyatita (Ibid).

Practitioners of uccara yoga have to meditate upon: 1) their own individual I-consciousness, 2) its solitary existence as it becomes freed from objects and means of knowing, 3) prana and apana moving together, 4) samana, 5) udana, and 6) vyana. The practitioners are supposed to meditate upon all of these objects with the understanding that they are nothing other than their own inner Self. They withdraw their attention from the body and the mind, and focus on the most subtle elements of the pure power of animation working in its five functions as described above.

More exact descriptions of how this is done are not available in any of the existing texts. It is supposed to be learned directly from an experienced yogin serving as a preceptor. When uccāra yoga is practiced with the six objects

mentioned above, it results in six varieties of Self-bliss which are given below in their ascending order of merit: 1) nijananda, 2) nirananda, 3) parananda, 4) brahmananda, 5) mahananda, and 6) cidananda (TA.V.44-50). Beyond these six stages of Self-bliss lies the infinite bliss known as 7) jagadananda (Ibid. 50,52). It is this form of Self-bliss which causes the Absolute to manifest its power through the five divine activities (TA.V.53)(MVV.I.893-895). All other types of bliss simply arise from the faintest glimpses of jagadananda which is itself the climax of all experiences of Self-bliss.

Aside from Kashmir Saivism, no other school of thought has produced such a thorough analysis of the various levels of Self-bliss. With regular practice, uccara yoga will lead to a superior form of anava samavesa and to a highly evolved state of liberation in this life time. Success in this practice also enables a practitioner to advance to more refined types of yoga.

Along with the experiences of Self-bliss described above, the practitioner will feel some peculiar sensations along the central nervous system inside the spine. These sensations are known in other Tantric systems as the movements of kundalini, the subtle power of animation (TA.V.111). This power can be aroused by several types of psycho-physical exercises and practices through which it is made to move upwards through the spinal cord. However, in the uccara yoga of the Trika system, all this happens automatically, without any effort or

complication. In this system there is no need to torture the body with difficult practices in order to taste the fruits of Kundalini yoga. They are simply the natural outcome of uccara yoga.

A practitioner of this yoga aims at recognizing that the infinite, perfect, divine, and blissful consciousness of the Self, and at becoming firmly established in it. In the process of becoming more adept at this yoga, a practitioner will pass through five increasingly refined levels of Self-experience known as ananda, udbhava, kampa, nidra, and ghurni. Abhinavagupta explains these discernible signs of progress in uccara yoga as follows:

1) At the first level a person will have just a flash of Self-realization in which they experience a faint touch or momentary face to face contact with the perfectness of their real Self. This contact produces a fleeting yet wonderfully sweet taste of Self-bliss. This is ananda.

2) At the second level of progress, a person will have a short but powerful experience of the psychic light of pure consciousness shining like lightening beyond their ordinary body-consciousness. This contact causes the physical body to experience a sudden upward emergence (udbhava).

3) Up until this level, a person's pure I-consciousness and their body-consciousness are integrated, like muddy water which has particles of earth so thoroughly mixed into it that one cannot discriminate between the two elements. But as a

person feels themselves becoming established in their divine powerfulness, and body-consciousness becomes increasingly feeble as a result, their physical form may start to tremble. This is known as trembling (kampa).

4) Then, as the life-long egocentric belief in their identity with the physical body becomes fully dissolved through inner awareness, the practitioner may start dozing if they are unable to remain established in pure consciousness. This is "sleep" (nirdra).

5) Finally, becoming well established in their real nature, and recognizing their Self in its universal aspect, the practitioner may feel a mild whirling movement in their head. This is caused by ecstasy and is called "swooning" (ghurni or mahavyapit), an absolute all-pervasiveness.

This sophisticated and highly evolved system of prana yoga is unknown in other schools of yoga in which the concept of prana is limited to the function of respiration. Although the terms samana, udana, and so on, are prevalent in other systems of yoga, their significance has been most clearly explained in the philosophical texts of Kashmir Saivism.

Karana Yoga

The term karana denotes the physical body which, along with certain nerve centers in it, is to be made the target of contemplative meditation. This practice includes many types of mudras prevalent in Hatha yoga. These physical postures are to be accompanied by special forms of contemplation which will

help a person realize the absolute divinity of their own nature. Kundalini yoga is part of this practice. Abhinavagupta has not clearly explained karana yoga and its method. He says that it is a mystic practice that should only be learned through the verbal teachings of a preceptor (Ibid. 130). It appears that karana yoga is very quick in yielding supernatural psycho-physical powers which are likely to be misused by unworthy practitioners. Because of this danger, Abhinavagupta keeps it a secret. Only an expert preceptor should teach this method, and only to those worthy disciples who will not misuse it. Success in karana yoga also results in a form of anava-samavesa, and allows the student to advance into higher types of Trika yoga.

Dhvani Yoga

In this context, dhvani refers to the sound of breathing. It is to be made the object of one's attention, and its rise and fall are to be meditated upon along with mystical syllables like 'so-ham' and 'ham-sa'. These mantras are to be experienced as subtly connected to the inward and outward movement of the breath. This method is also known as varna yoga (Ibid.131.23,33). This yoga is also practiced by Radha-swamins, and is known among them as surat or ajapa yoga. Sivayogins add to this practice the contemplation of devotional aspects of the philosophy and the understanding of their divinity within this absolute monism. This saves them from getting led astray into the pursuit of fame and money. This

practice brings about the attainment of an inferior type of anava samavesa.

Sthāna-kalpanā

Objective meditation on objects outside the person, when accompanied by the contemplation of non-dualistic theism, is known as sthāna-kalpanā. The two objects used are time and space. Each of these is further considered according to the three different aspects of fineness, subtleness, and grossness.

Time is an abstract entity. It is calculated and measured with the help of successive psycho-physical events and actions (IPV.III.i.3; Bh.II.12). The smallest unit of time that humans experience is a moment. Our experience of the length of a moment changes according to whether we are awake, asleep, dreaming, etc. Classically, a moment has been measured to be as long as one mental action (TA.VII.25). An idea, or thought is thus the basic measure of time. Ideas are accompanied by word images and in this way words can be said to be the measuring devices of time. There are two types of word-images, conceptual and non-conceptual. The most subtle type of word-image is non-conceptual in character and is called varna, meaning a sound or letter. Conceptual word images are gross in character and are represented by a full fledged word called pada. In between these two there is the category of mantra, a mystical syllable, which also is non-conceptual in character. These are the three paths of time called varna, mantra and pada (TS.47).

Space is likewise considered to have three aspects which are called kala, tattva, and bhuvana. They are respectively fine, subtle, and gross in character (Ibid). Bhuvanas are the actual abodes of beings. Tattvas, the thirty-six elements that encompass the universe, serve as components of bhuvanas. Kalas are the finer forms of tattvas. There are five kalas and most of them are made up of the subtle aspect of several tattvas grouped together. For example, pratishta kala contains the essence of all the tattvas from water to prakrti. The subtle form of the tattvas from purusa to maya are contained in vidya-kala, and the pure tattvas up to Sakti lie in śanti-kalā. Earth lies in nivrtti, and Sivatattva in śantyatitā (Ibid.109-110). According to the philosophical texts of the Trika, there are one hundred and eighteen bhuvanas. These are the three paths of meditation on space which constitute, along with the three paths of time, the six paths of meditation on outward objects known as sadadhvan.

A practitioner of sthāna-kalpanā yoga is supposed to contemplate, one by one, all the segments of time. Even vast aeons in their ascending order, up to the whole time of Lord Sadasiva's existence, have to be contemplated and contained within the movement of the breath (Ibid 61). This practice carries a person out of the limitations of time and washes away its impression from their subconscious mind. Consequently they develop an impression of eternity which becomes one with their essential nature. The practitioner realizes that they

are eternal. Similarly, they contemplate all the units of space, one by one, and visualize through deep imagination that these are contained inside their physical form (Ibid 63). This practice carries a person out of the limitations of space, and they realize the infinite phenomenal aspect of their nature. The practitioner realizes that they are infinite. This is one type of sthanakalpana yoga.

In another form of this yoga, a segment of any of the six paths is chosen as an object of meditation. With the aid of the imagination, this segment is visualized to be the Supreme Reality, containing the whole of existence within it, and running that existence according to divine will. This object is perceived to be absolute God appearing in His transcendental and universal aspects.

Many other types of meditation on objects have been discussed in the Tantraloka. The key to all forms of practice in sthana-kalpana, is the contemplation of absolute unity and divinity as the essential nature of the object of meditation.

All varieties of sthana-kalpana yoga lead to a lower type of anava-samavesa, and the development of divine powers of mastery over any of the bhuvanas, tattvas, etc. For this reason, a yogin who is interested in acquiring these divine powers, prefers sthana-kalpana to higher types of yoga. The approach adopted in sthana-kalpana can be extended to all types of ritual worship and religious activities. These situations will also result in anava-samavesa and can be recognized as

still lower varieties of sthana-kalpana. Ritual performances of many types of diksa (initiation) are also considered to be aids to Trika yoga. As with the above forms, these rituals should include contemplations of the absolute divinity of the worshipper, the worshipped, and the means of worship. The realization that everything is actually one thing, and the deep contemplation of this absolute non-dualism is also supposed to be carefully practiced in all forms of this yoga.

Even though Trika yoga contains so many extraordinary concepts and practices, there are very few people who have the keen interest and dedication to undertake this sophisticated and challenging type of yoga. This must have been the case even in Abhinavagupta's time for he says:

> "It is only the black bee and not the honey bee which has an enormous appetite for the fragrance of the ketaki flower. (Similarly) only those rare people who are guided from within by the grace of God, find interest in the absolutely non-dualistic worship of Bhairava, the one perfect whole of everything" (TA.IV.276).

Chapter 10

Aesthetics In Kashmir Śaivism

Aesthetics have always played an important role in the development of many elements of religion, theology, and philosophy in India. In Hinduism, God is not some distant, austere, disciplinarian ruler of the universe who causes his devotees to shudder in awe. Instead, He is thought of as a friendly, intimate, and loving master who is extremely beautiful and loveable. This is also the case with most of the popular deities of the Hindu pantheon. Even the goddess Kālī, whose form appears to be terrifying, is, in fact, considered an embodiment of affection and compassion. For her devotees, there is wonderful beauty even in her terrible appearance.

Historically, Indians have applied aesthetic principles even in religious rituals. The Indus Valley people worshipped their deities with dance. Vedic fire altars were constructed according to aesthetic norms. Rgvedic poetry, sung in praise of various forces of nature personified as gods with human-like forms, is rich in aesthetic value, as are the astronomical calculations, which have been long used to ascertain the proper times to begin various religious and secular functions. Agamic works on Śaivism and Śāktism contain wonderfully rich and beautiful descriptions of different tantric deities. It is indeed difficult to find any tantric deity who does not possess some powerful aesthetic charm for the devotee.

Further, the aesthetic value of objects to be offered during the worship of these deities is such an important aspect of the agamas that some otherwise prohibited offerings and rituals have been freely prescribed.

The aesthetically pleasing practices of song, music, and dance became very popular in Vaiṣnavism in the medieval period. Jayadeva's Gita-govinda is a typical example of this era. Cave paintings at Elora and Ajanta testify to the importance attached to beautiful religious images in India during the Buddhist age. Ancient temples and images at places like Khajuraho display a highly developed aesthetic sense in the art of stone carving.

Finally, the aesthetic outlook of Indian philosophers and theologians reached its climax in the tantric systems of spiritual practice (sādhanā). Vāmācāra, a typically tantric system of theology, prescribes the free use of various objects pleasing to the senses which are otherwise totally prohibited in Brahmanic Hinduism. Because these objects and rituals were pleasing to the senses, the system was given the name "vāma," because the basic meaning of the word vāma is beautiful, as in vāmāṅgī (a lady with beautiful form), vāmoru (she with beautiful thighs), vāma-locanā (she having beautiful eyes), and so on.

Most of the aesthetically rich elements of vāmācara became highly refined in the Kaulācāra. This tantric system of theology represents the true apex of aesthetic development in religio-theological practices. Many of these beautiful Kaula

practices were adopted by the most prominent ancient sages of the Trika system of Kashmir Śaivism. Bhatta Kallaṭa's description of the duti (a female assistant of a Kaula preceptor), quoted in the Tantrāloka (xxix•123,124), along with quotations from Somānanda's commentary on Parātrīṁśikā (P.Tr.V., p.52), prove that these masters of Kashmir Śaivism successfully practiced some of the most exquisite and sophisticated forms of the Kaula spiritual path (sādhanā).

Abhinavagupta devotes the whole of Chapter XXIX of the Tantrāloka to Kaulism. He pays high tribute to Macchanda-nātha, the originator of the Kaula system. In several of his important works, Abhinavagupta writes about Śambhunātha, a teacher for whom he shows immense respect and great indebtedness, who was also the master of the Jālandharapītha at Kāṅgrā, a center for tantric practices in the Punjab. Śambhunātha, was the leading authority on many esoteric practices of the Trika system, and was well known as the greatest master of the Kaula system of tantric theology. In the Tantrāloka, Abhinavagupta also pays tribute to Bhagavatī, Śambhunātha's dūti. According to Madhurāja, Abhinavagupta himself kept two dūtis by his side. Also, while describing the beauties of Pravarasenapura (modern Srinagar), Abhinavagupta mentions the abundance of wine in four different colors of wine, representing the four superior tantric deities (T.A. 37-42).

Even the great Śaṅkarācārya, who organized various orders of Hindu monks, and himself followed a puritanic form of

discipline, chose the beauties of poetic verse in his text Saundaryalahari, to describe the form of his favorite tantric deity Tripurasundari. This occurred because, as we discussed in Chapter 1, he was actually a tantric practitioner. Saundaryalahari represented his heart, his belief, and his practice, while his logical writing represented his head and powers of debate when challenged by the views of his philosophical antagonists.

While aesthetic richness has prevailed in Indian spiritual life from ancient times, there has also been a parallel puritanical aspect among Indian people. This puritanism was prevalent in various traditions of monks, and evolved into the systems of Buddhism and Jainism. Monks of these two religious paths prohibited the use of objects which were pleasing to the senses, and prescribed forcible control of the mind and senses, suppression of the emotions and instincts, and renunciation of worldly enjoyments. Those monks who became experts in this austere type of penance, often developed super-natural psychic powers like telepathy and hypnotism. Even though Patañjali denounced the attainment of such powers (siddhis) as being impediments to liberation (Y.S.IV-36-37), still they tended to have considerable influence on people from all walks of life. Brahmanic thinkers were influenced as well, but wisely accommodated the ideals and practices of these monks by placing them into the renunciation and hermit periods of a practitioner's later lifetime (the third and fourth stages

which follow the student and householder stage).

Tantric theologians did not accept puritanism. Instead they propagated a spiritual path which focused on the simultaneous attainment of enjoyment (bhukti), and liberation (mukti). They accepted both aspects as the goal of human life, and developed philosophies and methods which could be followed equally by both monks and householders. They did not approve of any form of forcible control or repression of the mind, emotions, and senses, but rather emphasized that such practices could create adverse reactions which might simply deepen a practitioner's bondage.

For the most highly qualified practitioners, these tantric masters prescribed the path of Trika yoga, which could yield both bhukti and mukti, could lead to the realization of one's divine essence, and eventually to the highest state of perfect liberation after death. In exceptional cases with aspirants who were naturally capable of controlling their minds without force, they taught an esoteric form of tantric theology which prescribes the use of various aesthetically pleasing objects and practices that lead spontaneously to states of bliss. This practice is known as the five makaras, and it is supposed to produce the attainment of both bhukti and mukti more quickly than other paths. The use of these otherwise prohibited objects and actions is said to bring about a quicker mastery in the practice of the śāmbhava and śākta upāyas of the Trika system. It was because of its effectiveness that the great

great masters of the Trika system adopted and used these Kaula practices. They have been recommended in couplets 69-74 of the Vijñāna-bhairava, an important scriptural work on the Trika system.

These particularly esoteric forms of Tantric sādhanā are so sophisticated and require so much spiritual training that they rarely can be successfully practiced by ordinary aspirants. Classically, they have been reserved for the most advanced and steadily centered devotees, those 'few on whom Lord Siva has bestowed his divine grace.' Abhinavagupta refers to this in his Vivarana on Para-triśika:

"Some such exceptional person alone, out of a hundred thousand people, will be able to bring my teaching to fruition" (P.Tr.V.p.281).

It is widely understood that these aesthetically pleasing tantric practices can also be extremely dangerous to spiritual advancement. A practitioner, while indulging in the practice of the makāras, may fall into a web of powerful sensual enjoyments and thereby lose sight of the higher spiritual goals of life. Because of the dangers inherent in these rituals, they have never been clearly described or discussed in any of the works of the ancient masters.

Whenever there is something of real merit and truth available, there are usually false forms of it being offered at a lower price. Naturally there will be hypocrites who may try to deceive people by ostentatious displays of Tantrism, and though misleading information about these practices. False

gurus existed even in Abhinavagupta's time and even he had to avoid their snares. He describes them as follows:

> "Being poor in intellect, wandering themselves in ignorance and delusion and catching a circle of foolish people in their grip through (falsely) aggrandizing their abilities, they delude people after binding them tightly in bondage" (Ibid)
>
> "Even I was deluded by many people like this, who felt themselves proudly to be preceptors of tattvam (the exact reality) even though they hadn't even experienced the essence of the two syllables - tat and tvam of the word tattvam, (meaning God and soul)" (Ibid).

In addition to these highly sophisticated and esoteric practices of tantric theology, there are other aesthetically pleasing aids to the spiritual life which have held a prominent place not only in Śaivism and Śāktism, but also in other branches of Hinduism. For instance, since the earliest periods of Indian history, music has been considered an important element in spiritual practices (sādhanā). Chanting of mantras from the Sāmaveda has been popular with spiritual aspirants since early Vedic times. Song and dance were popular with the pre-Vedic Indians of the Indus Valley Civilization. In the Yājñavalkya-smṛti, music of the vīṇā is described as a powerful aid in realizing the highest Truth. (Yā. Sm. III-115) Music and song are still a central part of the spiritual practice among Vaiṣṇava devotees from the lineage of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

The authors of Kashmir Śaivism also appreciated the power of music in the process of spiritual growth and so included it in the methods of their sādhanā. For example, in the Vijñāna-bhairava, the pleasure aroused by song and music is accepted as

a means to enter into the state of pure and blissful consciousness.

> "A yogin experiencing their oneness with some incomparable pleasure aroused by the experience of objects like sweet songs, etc., and fixing their mental attentiveness on it, finds unity with the Absolute Lord through a practice of absorption in this kind of phenomenon" (VBh. 73).

Abhinavagupta, the most respected authority on the interpretation of the principles and doctrines of Kashmir Saivism, explains philosophically the usefulness of the experience of music and other objects pleasing to the senses on the path of Self-realization. One form of this kind of sādhanā involves penetrating the innermost aspect of speech called pure awareness (parā-vāni) by passing through the successively superior and finer aspects of thinking (madhyamā) and awareness (paśyanti), the latter being the closest to para (see Chapter VI for an explanation of these types of speech). Abhinavagupta says that the subtle types of awareness (paśyantī) and thinking (madhyamā) can be realized in the melodious sounds of two different types of musical instruments. In his words from the Tantraloka:

> "The melodious sound of certain sweet tunes is (actually) the gross paśyantī form of speech because the differentiation caused by various letters is not present" (TA.III.237).

> "The sound which is produced from leather covered instruments (drums, etc.), is a gross form of madhyamā speech, as its verbal form becomes partly clear and remains partly obscure" (TA.III.241).

Abhinavagupta goes on to advise the student to focus, with the help of an esoteric method, on the finer aspects of these types

of speech. This method includes focusing one's attention on the successively finer aspects of speech and thereby entering into pure awareness (*parā-vāṇī*), the transcendental Self-awareness of the pure and infinite I-consciousness. He says:

> "The preceding mental contemplation with regard to these three types of gross speech, appearing separately as 1) I play the *sadja* tune, 2) I sweetly beat the small drum (*tabla*), and 3) I speak (outwardly), are experienced (as the finer forms of the three gross types of speech, shining as separate entities). (These are thus the finer forms of the three types of speech.) The basic source of even these (three finer forms of speech), which is free from all impositions, is that superior trinity which shines as *Siva*, the transcendental and infinite pure Consciousness" (TA.III.245-247).

He adds that staying continuously aware of the blissful nature of the tune of awareness (*paśyanti*) leads one to a quick realization that blissful, infinite, and pure Consciousness is none other than one's real Self. He says:

> "A very quick absorption is attained in a flash during the sound of this tune, because, being so close to pure consciousness, it is quite akin to it" (Ibid.III.239).

Madhurāja, author of the *Gurunātha-paramarśa*, says that Abhinavagupta always used to keep a *vīṇā* by his side, and would occasionally play it. He must have found the *vīṇā* a powerful aid in the practice of withdrawing his awareness from the world around him and focusing within on the purer consciousness of the Self. In the text, Madhurāja says:

> "He (Abhinavagupta) was playing on a special type of lute with the quivering tips of the nails of his lotus like left hand" (GNP.6).

Why did Kashmir Śaivism, along with other philosophies, place such importance on sound? The fifth *tattva* in ascending

order is ether (akāsa). It is the finest of the physical objects of the senses known as the five bhūtas, and according to classical philosophy, sound is the special characteristic quality of ether. Sound itself, the fifteenth tattva, is also the finest of the five specific sense perceptions known as tanmatras. Therefore, among all the tanmātras, sound is the most effective in subduing body-consciousness and in arousing the dormant blissfulness of pure consciousness. Because music is the most pleasing of all forms of sound, it was, and is still included as an aid to spiritual attainment in the practice of Kashmir Śaivism.

Music has another benefit as well. It is not likely that the deception of a false teacher or guru could contaminate the use of music in spiritual practices, as the simple enjoyment of music, and the pleasures of participating in its performance, are not dependent on the personality of a teacher. Music is equally available and uplifting to everyone.

Along with these outer forms of beauty and pleasure, there is also an inner aesthetic experience that arises in the practice of this philosophy which the puritanical spiritual schools have traditionally avoided. According to Kashmir Śaivism, both the transcendent and vital aspects of absolute Reality (Paramaśiva), should be understood and realized. Reality's transcendental aspect (Śiva) is experienced as something beyond all concepts and ideas:

> "It is very difficult to understand that (supreme transcendental) position. It is that final truth beyond

which nothing else exists at all" (TA.II.28).

The other aspect of the Truth is that vitality and absolute blissfulness which keeps It continuously and playfully manifesting the universe along with the other divine activities (Sakti).* The absolute Reality, shorn of its divine activities, would be diminished to the position of the void of dreamless sleep (śunya) as described by Buddhist thinkers. As Abhinavagupta says:

> "Had the Lord remained shining in only one way (as the transcendental consciousness alone), He would have given up his sakti and His being Consciousness, (and would become) just like an insentient object - like some earthen pot" (TA.III.100-101).

Thoughtful people, who have a highly developed aesthetic sense, would find no beauty in ~~this~~ that form of passive and ineffective Absolute. They would miss the divinely playful aspect of the Absolute which is infinitely beautiful. Precisely because of this infinite beauty, It is worshipped by Śaivas as tripurā-sundarī, the highest beauty in their experience of the three planes of unity (śakti), diversity (māyā), and diversely shining unity (vidyā). Absolute blissfulness is central to the realization of this aspect of the truth. In fact, the very process of realization itself can be positively blissful, and therefore it becomes the main goal of all the esoteric practices of Tantric Śaivism.

All of the blissful and beautiful aspects of the Absolute are present in each and every person and living thing, but they

*The five divine activities are: creation, preservation, dissolution, Self-oblivion, Self-recognition.

remain dormant because they are hidden behind the mask of maya. In other words, we are all blinded to this inner bliss and beauty by our limited sense of who we are, and by the habit of directing so much of our attention out into the world. Everyone can have momentary glimpses of inner bliss when they experience something that is extremely pleasing to the senses and the mind. But usually these situations are fleeting and simply leave a person unfulfilled and longing for more. They then pursue the outer objects in an attempt to rediscover the blissful state, not realizing that the source of bliss is within and need not be attached to an outer stimulus at all. This inner beauty can be discovered and contacted at will through simply turning our attention within, and through the various practices outlined in this yoga.

However, as we have already observed, this philosophy does not exclude using the outer object of beauty as a means to reach the inner source. If a person is extraordinarily alert at the moment of experiencing some object sweet to the senses, and blissful to the mind, they will find access to the source of their infinite blissfulness through the secret path of these momentary experiences of sensual pleasure. This can best be attained by developing an intensely sharp and quick awareness, known as avadhāna. This form of vigilant attentiveness is not generally possessed by ordinary people, but can become available through the practice of sambhavayoga. This awareness, or avadhāna, is the master key to spontaneously

opening all the doors leading to the realization of one's true nature of blissfulness. And as we have said, the very act of realizing this truth is itself blissful. This recognition of our Self as infinite beauty and joy and divine power is the main aim of all the theories and practices of Śaivism.

As was discussed in detail in Chapter 9, Śaivism recommends several types of yoga practices. The most elementary type recommends meditation on specific objects along with contemplation on the real nature of these objects. This type of practice is called kriya yoga or āṇava upāya. At a more advanced level, the subject rather than the object becomes the focus of meditation. This contemplation on the real nature of one's own Self is known as jñāna yoga or śākta upāya. A still more refined level of practice involves the direct realization of the true nature of the Self. This is known as śāmbhava-upāya, and because it is practiced through the use of one's will power, it is called icchā yoga as well. Above all of these practices is the form known as ānanda yoga or anupāya yoga. Sometimes it is not considered a separate level, but simply the highest phase of śāmbhava-upāya. It involves direct self recognition, and has also been called the methodless method.

According to Śaivism, anupāya may also be reached by entering into the infinite blissfulness of the Self through the powerful experiences of sensual pleasures. This practice is supposed to help the practitioner reach the highest levels by

accelerating their progress through the śākta and śāmbhava upāyas. These carefully guarded doctrines of Tantric sādhanā are the basis for certain practices, like the use of the five makāras mentioned earlier. The experience of a powerful sensual pleasure quickly removes a person's dullness or indifference. It awakens in them the hidden nature and source of blissfulness and starts it vibrating within. Abhinavagupta says that only those people who have awakened to their own inner vitality can truly be said to have a heart (hṛdaya). They are known as sahṛdaya (connoisseurs). Those uninfluenced by this type of experience are said to be heartless. In his words:

> "It is explained thus - The heart of a person, shedding off its attitude of indifference, while listening to the sweet sounds of a song or while feeling the delightful touch of something like sandal paste, immediately starts a wonderful vibratory movement. (This) is called ānanda-śakti and because of its presence the person concerned is considered to have a heart (in their body)" (T.A.III.209-210).
>
> "People who do not become one (with such blissful experiences), and who do not feel their physical body being merged into it, are said to be heartless because their consciousness itself remains unmerged (in the gross body)" (Ibid.III.240).

The philosopher Jayaratha addresses this topic as well when he quotes a verse from a work by an author named Prasastabhuti-pada:

> "The worship to be performed by advanced aspirants consists of strengthening their position in the basic state of (infinite and blissful pure consciousness), on the occasions of the experiences of all such delightful objects which are to be seen here as having sweet and beautiful forms" (T.A.II.219).

These authors are pointing out that if a person participates in pleasurable experiences with that special sharp awareness or attentiveness or vigilence known as avadhana, they will become oblivious to the limitations of their usual body-consciousness and their pure consciousness will be fully illumined. According to Vijnanabhairava:

> "A Sivayogin, having directed his attention to the inner bliss which arises on the occasion of some immense joy, or on seeing a close relative after a long time, should immerse his mind in that bliss and become one with it" (V.B.71).
>
> "A yogin should fix his mind on each phenomenon which brings satisfaction (because) his own state of infinite bliss arises there-in" (Ibid.74)

In summary, Kashmir Śaivism is a philosophy that embraces life in its totality. It does not shy away from the pleasant and aesthetically pleasing aspects of life as somehow being unspiritual or contaminated the way puritanical systems do. On the contrary. Great importance has been placed on the aesthetic quality of spiritual practice in Kashmir Śaivism. In fact, recognizing and celebrating the aesthetic aspect of the Absolute is one of the central principles of this philosophy.

CHAPTER 11

The Vilasa Principle In Neo-Saivism

Acharya Amrta-vāgbhava, the originator of Neo-Śaivism, was born in 1903 under the name Vaidyanatha Varakale into a family of Brahmin scholars living at Allahabad. The family's ancestors had originally come from Vidarbha in western Maharashtra, and for untold generations had been producing scholars of Sanskrit. Members of this family rarely took employment of any kind, but mostly lived on offerings from students and listeners as they taught and propagated the Sanskrit language. During the young scholar's sacred thread ceremony in 1919, he received initiation in Śrī-Vidya and accepted Bāla Tripura as his favorite deity. As a result of his faithful adoration of the deity, he had a vision of sage Durvāsas who appeared before him at the dead of night in his ancestral home and taught him the exact method of sambhava yoga known to the Trika system of Śaivism. A regular practice in this yoga resulted in his intuitive realization of the main philosophical principles of what he would later discover to be Kashmir Śaivism. At this point his only exposure was certain hymns that he had memorized in praise of Siva and Sakti.

Vaidyanātha Varakale, who became famous under his pen-name, Amṛta-vāgbhava, received higher education at Queen's Sanskrit College in Varanasi where M.M. Upādhyāya Śri Gopīnāth Kaviraj was serving as principal. Dr. Kaviraj Ji advised him to study Abhinavagupta's Paramārthasāra. He read it along with

the commentary by Yogaraja, and found the same philosophical principles discussed in it which he had already discovered through his yogic experiences. He then went on to study the Mahārtha-mañjarī-Parimala of Maheśvarānanda, and Bhoja's Tattva-prakāśa. He was very gratified to find that in these works too, his own experiences agreed with the views of these ancient masters.

In 1926, when he was working as a research scholar at the Sarasvati Bhavan Library in Varanasi, he composed Paramasiva-stotra, a text adoring Śiva in the form of the thirty-six tattvas, which was inspired by his own personal experiences during the practice of sambhava yoga.

In 1928, he left his home and took up the life of a wandering monk. He travelled in various parts of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Panjab, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu-Kashmir, seeing most of the sacred places of these states. At many of these sites he experienced different types of strange and wonderful visions. Most of these he described later in his Siddha-mahā-rahasya. Later on he continued his journeys in Rajasthan, Bombay, Hyderabad, and finally to Calcutta in the east. During his travels, he wrote many philosophical and religious texts, and composed secular poetry along with hymns to different deities.

During his wanderings in Kashmir, he studied the works of the ancient masters Abhinavagupta, Utpaladeva, Somananda, and others. He was always astonished to find in these texts the

same philosophical principles which he had intuitively experienced during the practice of sambhava yoga as taught to him by the sage Durvasas in that vision years earlier. (Final page of this biography is on its way from Panditji).

Acharya Amrta-vagbhava has become known as the originator of Neo-Śaivism. While he wrote widely on philosophy, politics, and religion, as well as composing many hymns and poems, Atma-vilasa, Vimsatika-sastra, and Siddha-maharahasya, are his most important works on the non-dualistic philosophy of Kashmir Śaivism.

In this chapter we will examine Vilasa-siddhanta, the most important philosophical principle of Neo-Śaivism which appears in Amrta-vagbhava's first work, Ātma-vilāsa. This text was written in 1934 while the Acharya was on tour in the Kashmir Valley.

Vilasa is one of those complex Sanskrit words that is exceedingly difficult to translate into one or two equivalent English words. It can be best understood as that essential nature of the Absolute which has been called lila in Vaisnavism, and aiśvarya in Śaivism. Throughout this text we have used the term "divine essence" to approximate the complex notion implied by this principle.

The word vilāsa has been translated as luxurious dalliance, but this unfortunately implies a possible decadence, or wasteful laziness. In English, dalliance can also mean amorous play or flirtation, which is closer to the idea that

this word conveys. Vilasa is a strong word with no negative connotations. It implies the stirring and blissful sexual interaction with a lover who is both virile and at ease due to complete freedom and a transcendence of time. Vilasa includes the idea of a playful, radiant, virile, spontaneous, and leisurely form of erotic play. It describes the amorous couple during their most enticing and rapture filled exchange. Yet while this form of sexual encounter with the lover forms the basis of this term, vilasa has far broader connotations. It implies that one's interactions with the whole environment will be infused and permeated with this expectant and exuberant quality.

More specifically, the word vilasa can be divided into the prefix vi and the root las. Las carries many meanings, but is frequently used to denote both a dance and beauty. In this case las is the gentle loving dance of Parvati, as opposed to tandava, the strong and sometimes destructive dance of Siva. The prefix vi is an intensifier which suggests excellence and abundance. Knowing the above conditions, we could translate Vilasa with the term "divine play," or "divine exuberance."

Let us now review the Kashmir Saivite theory of creation and its central concept of divine essence which is known as Vilasa in Neo-Saivism. The whole universe, all phenomena and their functions, are the manifestations of the divine exuberance (vilasa) of the non-dualistic Absolute. This Absolute is the only eternally existent reality, and is

described as radiant, infinite, all-containing, and perfectly pure I-consciousness. It is totally aware of its own divine potency, and this awareness has been described as a kind of subtle movement or spiritual stirring. This stirring is, in essence, that infinite blissfulness of the Absolute that sets in motion the outward illumination of Its divine nature. Consciousness starts to shine with a strong will to express Itself externally. In the initial blissful stirrings of this will, the nature of absolute Consciousness shines with omniscience and omnipotence. At the next level of manifestation this stirring starts to shine as a dramatic play. It reflects outwardly the divine powers of the Absolute which shine as the thirty-six elements from Siva to earth. These outward reflections appear not only as phenomenal objects, but also as subjects - as all types of sentient beings.

As ordinary people we embody all thirty-six tattvas, yet we do not understand the divine nature of our true Self - the Absolute. We think of ourselves as being some combination of our body and mind, experience ourselves as having limited capabilities, see the world as different from ourselves, and move in cycles of transmigration according to the divine law of retribution (karman).

The Absolute, shining above the highest level of the thirty-six tattvas, bestows Its divine grace on us. At this point we become transformed, search for a teacher, develop an interest in spiritual philosophy, receive initiation, practice

with intense devotion, and finally realize that we are none other that the absolute and infinite I-consciousness which is calmly delighting in the play of creating the universe. Throughout this creation, Consciousness is manifesting Its own divine powers in the form of all things which shine within It, just as reflections shine in a crystal. This realization gives us perfect satisfaction, and we feel we have finally attained the highest possible state. All this is the exuberant play of absolute Consciousness.

In the above play we experience the outward manifestation of the Lord's divine essence which appears as the dramatic show of the five divine cosmic activities: creation, preservation, dissolution, self-oblivion, and self-recognition. In Neo-Saivism, this fivefold play of God is called the vilasa of the Lord. This vilasa is His essential nature, and it causes Him to continuously manifest this quality through these five divine activities.

Achārya Amrta-vāgbhava's first important text, Atma-vilasa, is centered on this principle of vilāsa. This theory of the divine has been discussed in different contexts in all the main chapters of this text. A perfect Śiva yogin experiences everything in phenomenal existence as the vilāsa of his real Self because all things, including himself, are simply expressions of this divine exuberance. Such a yogin actually experience his own Self as none other than Lord Siva, the absolute God. Seeing his own vilasa in all things is correct

knowledge and liberation, while not seeing this is ignorance and bondage.

In the Introduction we have already shown how this concept of the divine differs from other schools of Indian philosophy, and the same holds true with the concept of vilasa in Neo-Saivism. The concept of theism of all the theistic schools, and the atheism of the atheistic schools, are simply further examples of the vilasa of the Absolute. This is the case for all subjects, objects, and means of knowing. This vilasa of God is thus the central theory of the Neo-Saivite philosophy.

In the following overview of the text Atma-vilasa, we can easily recognize all the main principles of the ancient non-dualistic Saivism from Kashmir as they are reinterpreted with the term vilasa. In the first verse of Chapter I, Acharya Amrta-Vagbhava focuses on vilasa as the cause of the divine activities of God, thus dismissing the notions of illusion (maya), ignorance (avidya), innate propensity (vasana), compassion (karuna), the restlessness of rajas, etc. He speaks of this vilasa as being ever-new and freshly charming.

In the first verse of the second chapter the Acharya emphasizes the following facts: 1) God is great by virtue of His vilasa which is His essential nature; 2) Through His vilasa He manifests His own Self as all phenomena; 3) He is eternally elevated to this position of authority (His divine essence); 4) He excels all other divine authorities. (See Appendix i)

In the second verse of this chapter, he clarifies that

because of Its vilasa, absolute Consciousness is spoken of as Siva and Sakti, or as Lord and His divine essence. Siva is the noumenal aspect, and Sakti the phenomenal aspect, and both are just two phases of vilasa. In the third verse he says: "Vilasa is not different from Atman, and Atman is not different from Vilasa. This is the real monism shining as existence, consciousness, and blissfulness in their perfect unity (AV, II-3). Atman is the Lord and vilasa is His divine essence. These are just two ideas about one reality, and they are being expressed through two different words.

In the fourth verse of Chapter II, the author points out how different philosophers are only describing the vilasa of the Lord as it manifests itself at different levels of His dramatic play of phenomenal creation. It is therefore the Vilasa of the Lord which is discovered and described as the doctrine of "new creation" (arambhavada) by the Nyaya-Vaisesikas, as the doctrine of "transformation" (parinamavada) by the Samkhyas and yogins, as vivarta-vada by the Advaita-Vedantins, as vijnavada by the Buddhists, and as atheism by the atheists.

In the twelfth verse of Chapter II, Acharya clarifies that the blissfulness of the Atman arises from the awareness of His pure and divine Consciousness. Pure consciousness is not static like physical space. It is full of the stirrings of Self-awareness, and this awareness illuminates the blissfulness of the Atman. Even this most subtle and essential nature of

the Atman, this stirring of awareness, is set in motion by His vilasa.

The vilasa of the Atman is further described in chapter three of Atma-vilasa. The Lord is again described as nothing but pure Consciousness, and as containing everything within Himself in the form of pure Consciousness alone (AV.III.1). Then in the third verse of this chapter the author says: "Only God is truly independent because He alone shines independently through the luminosity of His own pure consciousness. All other forms of life, from Brahma (the creator) to a lowly plant, operate under His vilasa." In verses eight and nine, he explains how the things of this world that we experience as dualities, having been manifested by the Atman through His vilasa, are not absolute truth. There is a wonderful and perfect reality which transcends all dualities and concepts. This transcendent reality consists of existence, consciousness, and blissfulness. "It is the infinite Self-awareness, and, 'that I am'" (AV.III.8,9).

The fourth chapter of Atma-vilasa deals with the principle of absolute and pure knowledge (mahāvidyā). In the first verse, Absolute Reality is called mahāvidyā, which due to its vilāsa manifests itself as both correct knowledge (vidya), and ignorance (avidyā). The Acharya points out that ignorance is not a adventitious entity (upādhi), somehow having its existence outside of Absolute Reality or mahāvidyā, as it is being called here. Because pure knowledge has vilasa as its

essential nature, It appears playfully as ignorance as well as knowledge. In other words, in Neo-Saivism the source of ignorance is found within Absolute Reality itself.

In the second verse of chapter four, the Acharya explains further that both knowledge and ignorance are sentient because they have been manifested by the vilasa of the Atman. However, because knowledge does not include ignorance, and ignorance does not include knowledge, both are imperfect. Only pure knowledge, appearing in the form of both ignorance and knowledge, and including both within itself, is perfect in character. In other words, we must look beyond the limitations at the level of creation to find and recognize the perfect source of all that is.

The fifth chapter of this work deals further with the notions of purity and impurity. Here the Acharya explains how the Absolute, which is perfectly pure, appears itself in the form of relatively purity and impurity. He says: "The ever-blissful Lord is an expert in raising purity to its full bloom. He, having descended (to the grossest levels) through his vilasa, and ascending again (to the subtlest levels), in accordance with His own will, rises up (to perfection), experiencing His Self-bliss throughout the whole process" (AV. IV.4).

Purity is experienced as most brilliant when it appears in comparison with impurity. The Lord, by descending to the level of an ordinary human being, creates a show of intense

impurity. Then, when He raises that person up, the highest level of purity will be experienced as especially wonderful in comparison to the previous impure level. This whole cycle of devolution and evolution is explained as being merely the vilasa of the Lord. A person's experience of limitation and finitude, the vision of diversity, the personal association with insentient substances like the physical body, and the feelings of responsibility for deeds committed by one's body, mind, senses, and organs, are all considered impure in Saivism. Identity with the infinite and pure I-consciousness, a non-dualistic view toward all phenomena, feelings of omniscience and omnipotence, etc., are considered pure in Saivism. And ultimately, the awareness of one's natural purity is not as wonderful as its realization in comparison with impurity. It is the discovery of one's real nature of absolute purity, after having been bound in impurity, which is the apex of the divine exuberance (vilasa) of the Lord.

In the fourteenth verse, the Acharya points out that the Lord never becomes involved in his deeds, but shines like a lamp as a witness to them all. Similarly, the perfect Siva-yogins see all phenomena, along with the various functions of these phenomena, as their own playful vilasa. In verse twenty-four, the Acharya describes the perfection of their sacrifice as follows:

> "Perfectly pure beings, having evolved the world through their own natural vilasa, and offering all things as oblations to the sacred fire of their own pure and perfect Consciousness, excel all while drinking deep the nectar of

> the blissfulness of their own vilasa, vibrating within their heart" (AV.V.24).

Such a yogin takes the limitations of the world, absorbs them into himself, and offers them into the sacred fire of pure I-consciousness. The ability to thus transform the mundane and limited into the finest and purest, is the highest goal of all life.

In the sixth chapter, the Acharya discusses the active and non-active aspects of the Absolute. The Lord performs all deeds while remaining untouched by their purity or impurity, or by responsibility for their results. God playfully conducts His five divine activities, while remaining completely free of any purpose or aim connected to the process. It is simply His nature, vilasa, to keep this phenomenal play in constant motion. Because He is not involved in any goal, He remains free from all responsibility for the results. "He simply shines always as the perfect do-er of everything" (AV.VI.24). All of this amazing universe, its creation, sustenance, and dissolution, along with God's Self-obscuration and Self-recognition, is nothing but the vilasa of the real Atman.

APPENDIX OF SANSKRIT QUOTES

Introduction:

Durvijñeyā hi sāvasthā kimaphetad anuttaram.
(T.A.II.28)
"It is very difficult to understand the character of this state. It is therefore said to be that form of transcendental reality beyond which nothing else exists."

Chapter 1: Parādvaita, the Absolute Monism

"Brahmāpīstam avidyayā saha tato naikānta-vado pyayam."
(I.P.V.V.III.404)
"Since Brahman has been accepted as having avidyā (as another beginningless element) along with him, this cannot be accepted as a monistic doctrine."

"Avidyayā ityanirvācya-rūpayā. Ayam Brahma-vādopi naikānta-vádo, na niscitādvaita-vādah iti." (I.P.V.V. III.404)
"Avidyā is said to be inexplicable. This doctrine of brahma-vāda is not a definite principle, that is to say, it cannot be accepted as a definitively non-dualistic doctrine."

"Vivarto hyasatya-rúpa-nirbhásametyuktam; nirbhasate casatyam ceti katham iti tu na cintitam." (Ibid.I.8)
"It has been said that vivarta is the manifestation of an unreal entity. How can it be unreal when it is manifested? This anomaly has not been given due consideration."

"Avidyā cānirvācyā, vaicitryam cādhatte, iti vyāhatam."
(Ibid.I.9)
"There is a contradiction in saying that avidyā is indescribable and yet brings about (the manifestation of) multifarious diversity."

"Eka-padena Brahma-vivartavādo-pi nānyah siddah iti dhvanati." (Ibid.I.176)
"The word 'one' suggests that even the other theory of the false appearance of Brahman, (in the form of phenomenon), can not be established."

"Pasu-pramātrnām astyakhyāti-rupo mohah. Kāranam casyeśvara-śaktiriti svarūpatah kāranatasca nirvācyataiva. Na khalvanirvācyākārah kaścid avidyatmā mohah. Avastutvenāsyeyad-vaicitryaprathana-sámarthyāsambhavāt. Sambhavo vā purnam eva vastutvam, nánirvācyatā." (Ibid.p. 80)
"There is self-contradiction in saying that avidyā is indescribable and in describing it as the entity that

assumes the whole infinitely varied display of phenomena. To say that finite beings are deluded by the beginningless ignorance brought about by avidyā, the divine power of God, implies that such a power is surely describable, and it is actually described in that way. Besides, a non-substantial entity could not have the capacity to manifest such an extraordinary show. If it is really capable of creating, then it must be a truly existent entity and not an apparent and indescribable one."

"Ityesā hi na Sāmkhyeyā nāpi Vaidāntikī dṛg, api tu Śaivyéva." (P.Tr.V.181)
"It is thus not the view of the Sàmkhya system, nor that of Vedānta, but that of Śaivism only."

"Antargata-viśva-vīrya-samucchalattāt-maka-visarga-viśleṣānanda-śaktyeka-ghanam Brahma bṛhad vyāpakam bṛmhitam ca." (Ibid.221)
"Brahman is one compact whole, that power of bliss which projects itself externally by a kind of spilling out of the universal creative potency lying within. Infinite consciousness gets evolved into all phenomenal existence, just as the word Brahman means both the all-pervading infinite and the evolved entity."

"Natu Vedānta-pāthakāṅgīkrta-śūnya-vādāvidūra-varti-Brahmadarśana ivá." (Ibid.221)
"The Brahman of Śaivism is not the same as that of Advaita Vedānta which comes very close to the final principle of nihilistic Buddhism."

"Ata eva bhedābhedayor virodham duḥsamartham-abhimanya-mānair ekair avidyātvena anirvācyatvam aparaiścabhāsa-lagnatayā sāmvṛtatvam abhidadhadbhir ātmā parasca vañcitaḥ." (I.P.V.BH.II.131)
"Finding the contradiction between unity and diversity quite irreconcilable, some thinkers (ie Vedāntins) stated that apparent diversity was inexplicable because of its being Avidyā (basic ignorance), while others (ie Buddhists) said that diversity was false because it was an outcome of Samvṛti (mental ideation). Thus both of them deceived themselves and others as well."

"Cidrūpasyaikatvam yadi vāstavam, bhedaḥ punar ayam avidyopaplavād ityucyate, tadā kasyāyam avidyopaplavaḥ iti na saṅgacchate. Brahmano hi Vidyaikarūpasya katham avidyā-rūpatā? Na cānyaḥ Kaścid asti vastuto jīvādir yasyavidyā bhavet." (Ibid.201)
"If it is argued that the unity of absolute consciousness is a reality, and that (the appearance) of diversity is due to the disturbance caused by avidya, it is

irresolvable as to who is responsible for this defect of ignorance. For, on the one hand, how could Brahman, who is pure knowledge, assume the form of ignorance? And, on the other hand, in reality there is no other creature to whom ignorance could occur."

"Anirvācyeyamavidyeti cet, Kasyānirvācyeti na vidmah. Svarupena ca bhāti na ca nirvācyeti kimetat? Yuktyā nopapadyate iti cet, samvedana-tiraskārinī Ka Khalu yuktir nāma. Anupapattiś ca bhāsamanasya kānyā bhavisyati." (Ibid. 202)

"If avidya is said to be inexplicable, it is not clear to us for whom it is inexplicable. On the one hand, its essential character becomes manifest, on the other hand, it is said to be an indescribable entity. Which is it? If this means that its existence cannot be explained or justified through logical arguments, then we ask what kind of logic is it that could contradict direct experience? How can an entity, which shines in experience, be unjustifiable?"

"Samvid-rūpam Brahma abhinnam cakastyavikalpake, vikalpa-battu bhedoyam." (Ibid. 202)

"Brahman, the pure consciousness, shines alone as an existent truth in nirvikalpa cognition, a direct experience free from ideation, and phenomenal diversity appears as a result of mental ideation."

"Kasyayam Vikalpanavyaparo nama? Brahmanas-ced avidya-yogo, na canyosti." (Ibid.202)

"Who conducts such ideation? If Brahman conducts it, He becomes stained by avidya. None other than He exists, so who else could conduct it."

"Avikalpakam ca satyam, vikalpakam asatyam, iti kuto vibhago; bhasamanasyavisesat." (Ibid.202)

"How can a distinction be established that knowledge without ideation is real while knowledge with ideation is unreal, when both of them shine with equal brilliance?"

"Bhasamanam-avadhirya agama-pramanakoyam-abhedah iti ced, agamopi bhedatmaka eva vastubhutah." (Ibid.203)

"If it is argued that unity is established on the basis of scriptural authority with disregard for mundane knowledge, then it is pointed out here that scriptures themselves hold authority in the field of diversity and have diversity as their character."

"Vastavam cidekatvam abhyupagamyapi tasya kartrtva-laksana bhinnarupa-samavesatmika kriya nopapadyate. Paramarsa-svarupam tu svatantryam yadi bhavati tadopapadyate sarvam." (Ibid.203-4)

"If the absolute monistic existence of pure consciousness is accepted, then its independent activity of bearing diverse forms can not be explained at all. But all this can be justified and explained if it be accepted as endowed with freedom in the form of Self-awareness."

1. Idam hi tat paradvaitam bheda-tyagagraham na yati. (MVV.I-123)
"It is that absolute monism in which diversity is neither denied nor established."

2. Anusmin paramadvaita prakasatmani ko'parah (TA.II.16)
"What other entity can there be in the absolute and monistic pure conscious."

3. Paramadvaya-dristim tat Samsrayeh saranam mahat (MVV.I.693)
"Please take refuge in the limitless view of that absolute monism."

ucyate nadvaye'musmin dvaitam nastyeva sarvatha: uktam hi bheda-vandhye'pi vibhau bhedavabhasanam. (MVV. I.108)
"It is not being said that diversity does not exist at all in this (understanding of) non-dualism. The manifestation of diversity has been accepted even in that which is devoid of all differentiation."

Kintu durghatakaritvat / Svacchandyam nirmaladasau; / Svatma-pracchadana-krida- / Panditah Paramesvarah. (TA. IV.10)
"But Almighty God, being able to do even the impossible, and possessing pure Self-dependence, is skilled in playfully concealing His real Self."

Asthasyad ekarupena vapusa cen mahesvarah:/ mahesvaratvam samvittvam tadatyaksyad ghatadivat. (TA.III.100)
"If Almighty God had remained forever in one form, He would have to give up His consciousness and creative power, thus becoming an insentient article like an earthern water vessel."

Etau bandha-vimoksau ca / Paramesa-svarupatah; / Na bhidyate na bhedohi/ Tattvatah Paramesvare. (BPD.14)
"These twin concepts of bondage and liberation are the essential character of Almighty God, because, in fact, the concept of difference does not exist in him at all."

Idam sandhana-kalika-parinisthita-buddhina; / Acarya-narasimhena / Pratyaksadvayamucyate. (MVV.I.763)
"The great teacher, Narasimhagupta, having ripened his intellect in the art of correct contemplation, calls this the non-dualism that can be perceived through one's

external senses."

a) Tasmad visayabhimatam vastu sariratayа grhitva/tavanirbhasamana atmaiva prakasate viccheda-sunya. (Bh.I.52)
"Therefore, only the atman (Self) shines (everywhere) taking as its form the whole objective existence known as the universe, and appearing as all this without any break.
b) Prakasamana-svabhavatve visayo'pi sarvatmana prakasa eva nimagna iti prakasah prakasate ityetavan-matra-paramarthatve kah sarvajnasarvajna-vibhagah. (Ibid.51)
"Being itself of the nature of consciousness, the object too is wholly immersed in the light (of consciousness, the ultimate truth is merely that the light (of sincee consciousness) shines, what distinction could there be between onmiscience and its absence?"

"Ajnata-paryaya-pada-sthitin prati / Prayujyate padopa esa bhuruhah; / Kumbho ghatasceti tathaiva bhanyate/ mahesvarah sarvarmidam jagattviti. (MVV.I.929)
"Just as students not acquainted with certain synonymns are taught as follows: 'A padapa (tree) is a bhuruha, and a ghata (water vessel) is a kumbha," so it is said that the Almighty Lord is this whole phenomenon."

Idam hi tat paradvaitam bheda-tyaga-grahau na/yat. (Ibid. I.123)
"The absolute monism is that principle which neither refutes nor establishes diversity."

Ata eva hi bhedo'sti na kascid yo mahesvaram;/ advayam samprabhindita prakasananda-sundaram. (Ibid.I.621)
"Hence there is no such diversity which could cause any differenciation in the non-dual Almighty God, shining beautifully through His own blissful light of consciousness."

Idam dvaitam idam neti / Tadidam ca dvayadvayam; / Iti yatra samam bhati / Tadadvayam udahrtam. (MVV.I.626)
"The real non-dualism is that philosophical view which sees only one Truth in diverse statements like - 'This is diversity, this is non-diversity,(that is unity) and , this is both diversity and unity.',"

Evam svatantrya-purnatvad- / Atidurghata-karyayam; / Kena nama na rupena / Bhasate Paramesvarah. (Ibid.I.92)
"The Almighty Lord, is thus, by virtue of His perfect independence, capable of doing the impossible. In what form does not the Supreme Lord appear?"

Niravaranamabhati / Bhatyavrta-nijatmakah; /Avrtanavrto bhati / Bahudha bheda-samgamat. (Ibid.I.93)

"He appears clearly without any covering and appears with His reality concealed under coverings. Then,accepting infinite diversity, He appears in wonderful variety as partly hidden and partly open."

Nirunam tadaga-paniyam/kah pravartayitum ksamah;
Paripurna tatas tasmin / Pravahah sarvatomukhah. (MVV. I.245,246)

"Who can make the shallow water of a tank overflow the brim? It is (only a spring), full up to the brim, that can send off flowing streams (of water) on all sides."

Chapter 2 Theistic Absolutism and Spiritual Realism

Samvritir vikalpa-buddhis, tadvasaducyatam samvrti-satyatam, satyatvasyaiva tu prakaras tat. (I.pr.V.II.2-3)

"Samvrti is the name given to mental ideation (accompanied by a word image). The phenomenon can, no doubt, be said to be a reality based on such ideation; it is indeed a reality of a specific kind (and is not falsehood)."

Cinmayatve 'vabhasanam antareva sthitis sada;
Mayaya-bhasamananam bahyatvad bahirapyasau."
[I.pr.I.8.7].

"All the apparent entities, having consciousness as their basic character, exist eternally only within (infinite) consciousness. At the same time, having an outward manifestation through maya, these entities do exist as well in outer phenomenon."

Kriya-sambandha-samanya-dravya-dik-kala-buddhayah;
Satyah sthairyopayogabhyam ekanekasraya matah.
[I.Pr.II.ii.1]

"Ideas like action, relation, universals, substance, directions (in space), time, etc., do have a real existence due to their continuity and utility and are based on the concept of unity in diversity."

Chapter 5 Four Types of Speech

Anadinidhanam Brahma Sabda Tattvam Yadaksram
Vivartatertha-bhavena pjrakriya jagto Yatah.
(V.P.I.1)

"The eternally existent Brahman, being the changeless essence of speech, appears in the form of phenomenal substance out of which the process of universal existence proceeds."

Citih pratyavamarsatma para vak svarasodita;
Svatantryametan mukhyam tad aisvaryam paramatma nah;
Sa sphuratta mahasatta desa-kala visesini;
Saisa sarataya prokta hrdayam parameshinah;

Atmanamata evayam jneyikuryat----------;
(I.Pr.I.v.13-15)

"Self awareness is the very soul of consciousness. It is spontaneously arising supreme speech (vac) and is that Self-dependence of the Absolute God which is known as His supreme Lordship. It is a kind of vibrative activity, and is the supreme basic existence, unconditioned by time, space, etc. Being the real essence of the supreme Lord, it is said to be His heart. It is by virtue of this self-awareness that He manifests Himself as objective existence."

Brahma brhad vyapakam brmhitam Ca; Na tu Vedanta-pathakangikrta-kevala-sunyavadavidura-varti-brahma-darsana iva. (P.Tr.V.221)

"Brahman is that infinite and all-pervading reality which has evolved (into phenomenal existence). This is not the same as the Brahman of that form of Vedanta which is similar to sunyavada."

Chapter 8 The Saktipata Principle of Saivism

Tena raga-ksayat karma-samyat sukrta-gauravat;
Mala-pakat suhrd-yogad bhakter bhavacca sevanat.
Abhyasad vasanodbhedat samskara-paripakatah;
Mithya-jnana-ksayat karma-sannyasat kamya-vicyuteh.
Samyaccittasya sa saktih patatiti yaducyate;
Tadasan nanu tatrapi nimittantara-marganat.
Anavasthatiprasangasambhavabhava-yogatah;
Anyonyasraya-nihsreni-cakrakadyupapatatah
(M.V.V.I.686, 692).

"As is being said, the bestowal of the divine grace of the Lord is the result of the causes listed as follows: consumption of attachment, equipotentiality of past deeds; high merits of piety, ripening of impurities, contact with well-wishers, emotional devotion to the Lord, regular service offered to Him, religious theological practice, dissolution of the flair for enjoyments, ripening of right impressions, eradication of incorrect knowledge, renunciation of activities, falling away of passionate longings, and equanimity of mind. But all that is incorrect, because all such things, (being themselves effects), must have their causes which are to be searched out. Besides, these (attributes) are involved in other logical defects like: anavastha, endlessness of argumentation; atiprasanga, unwarranted extension; asambhava, improbability; abhava, non-existence; anyonyasraya, interdependence; nihsreni, classlessness; and cakraka, circular dependence, etc."

Tasyaiva hi prasadena bhaktirutpadyate nrnam;

Yaya yanti param siddhim tad-bhava-gat-manasah.
(Ibid. I.697)
"It is His grace that gives rise to such devotion in human beings, through which they, devoting their minds to emotional love for Him, attain the highest perfection."

Animittas tatha cayam sakti-pato mahesituh (Ibid.I.168).
"Therefore the grace of the Lord does not depend on any external cause."

Upajagmur ato'napayinim, siva-saktim noca tam vina
bhavet; Apavarga-padam yato mudha, para-sastresu
vimoksa samkathah (Ibid.I.695).
"(The authority of) Lord Siva's unfettered power of grace has therefore been accepted (by philosophers) because the state of (perfect) liberation cannot be attained otherwise, as the arguments put forth by other schools of thought in this regard are of no avail."

Ittham purana-sastradau saktih sa paramesvari;
Nirapeksaiva kathita sapeksatve hyanisata(Ibid.I.698).
"Thus it has been said in sastras like the Puranas that the Lord's power of grace is absolutely independent; its dependence shall mean lack of Lordship in Him."

Nayamatma pravacanena labhyo
Na medhaya na bahuna srutena;
Yamesa vrnute tena labhyas
Tasyaisa atma vivrnute tanum svam (K.U.I.ii.22).
"The Self can neither be realized by means of discussions, nor through intelligence, nor through the careful listening to scriptures. The Self can only be realized by a being whom It selects for such purposes, and to him alone does It reveal Its real character."

Esa hyevainam sadhu karma karayati tam
Yamebhyo lokebhya unninisate.
Esa u tvasadhu karma karayati tam
Yamadho ninisate (Kau.U.3-9).
"It is He who directs such beings towards good actions whom He wants to lead above these mundane regions. Then it is He who directs those beings towards bad actions whom He wants to push below."

Tvam bhaktya priyase bhaktih prite tvayi ca natha yat;
Tadanyonyasrayam yuktam yatha vettha tvameva tat (S.St.
XVI.21).
"O Lord, Thou (are) pleased through devotion on our part, and our devotion toward Thee dependeth on Thy pleasure. The way in which such interdependence can be justified is known (best) to Thee alone."

Yah prasada-lava isvarasthito
Ya ca bhaktiriva mamupeyusi
Tau paraspara-samanvitau kada
Tadrse vapusi rudhimesyatah (Ibid.8.1).
"A very small fraction of grace (towards me) is present in the Lord, and something looking like devotion is rising in me. When shall these two things grow through mutual integration and attain the desired perfection!"

Jnanasya parama bhumir yogasya parama dasa;
Tvad-bhaktir ya vibho karhi purna me syat tadarthita (S.St.9.9).
"Devotion towards Thee is the highest aspect of pure knowledge as well as the uppermost level of yoga. O Lord! When will my request for that (devotion) become (perfectly) fruitful?"

Mukti-samjna vipakvaya bhaktereva tvayi prabho;
Tasyam adya-dasarudha mukta-kalpa vayam tatah (Ibid.16.19).
"O Lord! Liberation is the name given only to the perfectly ripened devotion towards Thee. Therefore we, having risen to its initial stage, are heading toward liberation."

Asthasyad eka-rupena vapusa cen mahesvarah;
mahesvaratvam samvitvam tadatyaksyad ghatadivat (T.A.III.101).
"Had the Lord remained confined to His one aspect (of transcendental consciousness) then He would have given up being God and being Consciousness, (and would be)just like an insentient substance, eg. an earthern pot."

Iti ced -- 'Alam grantha dharana-vacana-vyakhyana-vi-caranadi-mithya-yasena. Parityajya evayam guru bharah. Tusnim-bhava-saranaireva stheyam. Bhagavad-icchaivottaraniyamuttarayet.' Ucyate -- 'Tadi-cchaivanugrhatma evam-vicaranayam paryava-sayayati; Na khalu padaprasarikayaiva sukham sayanair bhunjanaisca svayamavimrsadbhih svapeksa-tivra-taradi-paramesvaranugraho-tpannadhika-suksma-tama-vimarsa-kusala-dhisana-parisilana-parahmukhair va sthatavyam, iti (P.Tr.V.126-127).
"If it is so, then what is the use of wrongly taken trouble in activities like collecting scriptures and works, reading them, explaining and discussing them, pondering on them, and so on? This heavy burden should be shaken off. Refuge should be taken in keeping silence. The will of the Lord shall itself carry ashore the person who is to be carried there." The answer to this objection is this: "It is the same gracious will of the Lord which

is leading us finally towards such contemplation (or sastras). Therefore it should not be our motto to eat merrily and sleep soundly with out-stretched legs, without either contemplating ourselves, or taking interest in discussions with worthy people who are blessed with the gracious activity of the Lord which is on a higher plane (than that working within us) and who have consequently developed a wisdom that is skilled in intricate thought."

Svabhavajena kaunteya, nibaddhah svena karmana;
Kurtum necchasi yan mohat, karisyasyavaso'pi tat
(BH.G.XVIII.60).
"O son of Kunti, being bound by your characteristic activity, you shall be destined to do that which you do not want to do on account of your delusion."

Chapter 9: Yoga in The Trika System

"Pranayamo na kartavyah sariram yena pidyate." (TA.IV.91)
"Breath control should not be practiced if it means torture to one's physical form."

Tathahi gururadiksad bahudha svakasane,
Anadara-viraktyaiva galantindriya-vrttayah.
Yavattu viniyamayante tavattavad vikurvate.
(MVV.II.111,112)
"It is so because my revered preceptor has thus advised many times during his teachings, 'The emotional functions of one's senses and organs calm themselves through spontaneous indifference (towards their objects when these become tasteless for them). But, on the other hand, these become liable to adverse reactions as long as they are forcibly repressed.'"

Svam panthanam hayasyeva manaso ye nirundhate,
Tesam tatkhandanayogad dhavatyutpatha-kotibhih." (Ibid. II.109)
"The mind of those aspirants who force it to give up its familiar path, runs astray, just like a steed, on millions of wrong paths."

Nimajjamanapyetad mano vaisayike rase,
Nantaradratvamabhyeti nischidram tumbakam yatha.
(MVV.I.08)
"The mind (of a Sivayogin) does not become wet (or stained) from within, just like the rind of a dried gourd which has no opening, even if it dives deep into the water of sensual pleasures."

"Yogam ekatvam icchanti vastuno'nyena vastuna." (MVT.IV.4)
"The unity of one (a finite being) with another (Almighty God) is called Yoga by Sivayogins."

"Susuptam tu dehadvanadara-krtam acira-kalam ca iti visesah. Tatrapi srama-krtam nidra, dhatudosakrtam murccha, dravyakrtam madonmadadi, svatantrya-krtam samadhir ityavantara-bhedah." (IPV.III.2.13)
"The sleeping state is the result of total non-recognition of the existence of one's body, etc. It is short lived and is, on that account, different (from pralaya, the phenomenal dissolution). It is sleep when caused by exhaustion, is swoon if brought about by some defect in some element in the body, is intoxication or madness when caused by some edible material, and is known as samadhi when brought about by one's own free will. These are its varieties."

Natirashasyam ekatra khyapyam na ca sarvatha gopyam iti hi asmadguravah. [TS.31]
"Our revered preceptor has said that a doctrine which is extremely secret in nature, should neither be clarified in a single context, nor should it be kept totally secret."

Ketaki-kusuma-saurabhe bhrsam
Bhrnga eva rasiko na maksika,
Bhairaviya-paramadvayarcane
Kopi rajyati Mahesa-coditah.
(TA.IV.276)
"It is only the black bee and not the honey bee which has an enormous appetite for the fragrance of the ketaki flower. (Similarly) only those rare people who are guided from within by the grace of God, find interest in the absolutely non-dualistic worship of Bhairava, the one perfect whole of everything."

Laksaiko'pi sa kascideva saphalah-kurvita yatnam mama.
(P.Tr.V.281)
"Some such exceptional person alone, out of a hundred thousand people, will be able to bring my teaching to fruition."

Bhramyanto bhramayanti manda-dhisnas te jantu-cakram jadam
Svatmikrtya gunabhidhana-vasato baddhva drdham bandhanaih.
(Ibid)
"Being poor in intellect, wandering themselves in ignorance and delusion and catching a circle of foolish people in their grip through (falsely) aggrandizing their abilities, they delude people after binding them tightly in bondage."

Bahubir api so'ham api bhramitas tattvopadesakam-manyaih;
Tattvam iti varnayugamapi yesam rasana na pasparsa (Ibid).

"Even I was deluded by many people like this, who felt themselves proudly to be preceptors of tattvam (the exact reality) even though they hadn't even experienced the essence of the two syllables - tat and tvam of the word tattvam, (meaning God and soul)."

"Gitadi-visayasvada / Sama-saukhyaikatatmanah;
Yoginas tan-mayatvena / Mano-rudhetadamata." (VBh.73)
"A yogin, experiencing their oneness with some incomparable pleasure aroused by the experience of objects like sweet songs, etc., and fixing their mental attentiveness on it, finds unity with the Absolute Lord through a practice of absorption in this kind of phenomenon."

"Tatra ya svana-sandarbha-subhaga nada-rupini;
Sa sthula khalu pasyanti / Varnadya-pravidbhagatah."
(TA.III.237)
"The melodious sound of certain sweet tunes is (actually) the gross pasyanti form of speech because the differentiation caused by various letters is not present."

"Yattu carmavanaddhadi / kincit tatraisa yo dhvanih;
Sa sphutasphuta-rupatvam / Madhyama sthula-rupini."
(TA.III.241)
"The sound which is produced from leather covered instruments (drums, etc.), is a gross form of madhyama speech, as its verbal form becomes partly clear and remains partly obscure."

"Asmin sthulatraye yattad anusandhanamadivat;
Prthak tat tritayam Suksmahityabhisabdyate.
Sadjam karomi madhuram vadayami bruve vacah;
Prthagevanusandhana trayam samvedyate kila.
Etasyapi trayasyadyam yadrupamanupadhimat;
Tat param tritayam tattra Sivah paracidatmankah."
(TA.III.245-247)
"The preceding mental contemplation with regard to these three types of gross speech, appearing separately as 1) I play the sadja tune, 2) I sweetly beat the small drum (tabla), and 3) I speak (outwardly), are experienced (as the finer forms of the three gross types of speech, shining as separate entities). (These are thus the finer forms of the three types of speech.) The basic source of even these (three finer forms of speech), which is free from all impositions, is that superior trinity which shines as Siva, the transcendental and infinite pure Consciousness."

"Tadasyam nada-rupayam samvitsavidha-vrttitah;
Sajatyat tanmayibhutir-jhagityevopalabhyate."
(Ibid.III.239)

"A very quick absorption is attained in a flash during the sound of this tune, because, being so close to pure consciousness, it is quite akin to it."

"Varna-sri-pani-padma-sphurita-nakha-mukhair vadayan nada vina;" (GNP.6)
"He (Abhinavagupta) was playing on a special type of lute with the quivering tips of the nails of his lotus like left hand."

"Dur-vijneya hi savastha / Kimapyetad anuttaram." (TA.II.28)
"It is very difficult to understand that (supreme transcendental) position. It is that final truth beyond which nothing else exists at all."

"Asthasyad ekarupena vapusa cen Mahesvarah, Mahesvaratvam samvittvam / Tadatyaksad ghatadivat." (TA.III.100-101)
"Had the Lord remained shining in only one way (as the transcendental consciousness alone), He would have given up his sakti and His being Consciousness, (and would become) just like an insentient object - like some earthen pot."

Tatha hi madhure gite sparse va candanadike; madhyasthya-vigame yasau hrdaye spandamanata. Ananda-saktih saivokta yatah sahrdayo janah. (T.A.III.209,10)
"It is explained thus - The heart of a person, shedding off its attitude of indifference while listening to the sweet sounds of a song or while feeling the delightful touch of something like sandal paste, immediately starts a wonderful vibratory movement. (This) is called ananda-sakti and because of its presence the person concerned is considered to have a heart (in their body)."

Yesam na tanmayibhutis te dehadinimajjanam; Avidanto amagna-samvin-manas tvahrdyaya iti. (Ibid.III.240)
"People who do not become one (with such blissful experiences), and who do not feel their physical body being merged into it, are said to be heartless because their consciousness itself remains unmerged (in the gross body)."

Ye ye bhava hladina iha drsyah subhaga-sundara krtayah; Tesam anubhava-kale svasthiti-pariposnam satamarca. (T.A.II.219)
"The worship to be performed by advanced aspirants consists of strengthening their position in the basic state of (infinite and blissful pure consciousness), on

the occasions of the experiences of all such delightful objects which are to be seen here as having sweet and beautiful forms."

Anande mahati prapte drste va bandhave cirat;
Anandamudgatam dhyatva Tallayas tanmana bhavet.
[V.B.71]
"A Sivayogin, having directed his attention to the inner bliss which arises on the occasion of some immense joy, or on seeing a close relative after a long time, should immerse his mind in that bliss and become one with it."

Yatrayatra manas-tustir manas tatraiva dharayet;
Tatratatra parananda-svarupam sampravartate.
[Ibid.74]
"A yogin should fix his mind on each phenomenon which brings satisfaction (because) his own state of infinite bliss arises there-in."

Chapter 11: The Vilasa Principle in Neo-Saivism

"Abhinava-ramaniyam saccidananda-kandam
Sva-nava-nava-vilasollasanaika-pravinam;
Anubhava-surahasyam mangalam mangalanam
Adhi hrdi Paramesam maunamevastaye'ham. (AV, I-1)
"Through the means of absolute silence (of speech, mind, intellect, etc.), I take the shelter of the Supreme God in my heart, because He, having a beauty which is always fresh, is the only true master of bringing the ever fresh exuberance of His (divine) play to full (outward) bloom. He is the innermost secret of Self-experience, and is the auspiciousness of everthing that is auspicious."

"Svatmanam sva-vilasena visva-rupenabhasayan;
Nityoditah Ko'pi devo jayatyatma Parah Sivah. (II-1)
"Atman, the Absolute God, Paramasiva, having eternally risen as some wonderful divine authority, excels all. Through His own luxurious vilasa, He manifests His own Self in the form of the whole universe."

"So'yam vilasa evasya saktirityudito budhaih;
Sivasakti-svarupabhyam vyavaharaya kalpate." (II-2)
"It is that vilasa of God which wise people call Sakti. Divine dealings through Sivahood and Saktihood, as well as these usages in academic activities, are also based on only that vilasa of God."

"Vilaso na svato bhinno, Vilasadapi na svayam;Tadetat saccidanandam advaitam paramarthikam. (II-3)
"Vilasa is not different from Atman, and Atman is not

different from Vilasa. That is the real monism shining as existence, consciousness, and blissfulness in their perfect unity."

"Taistair darsanikais-tattad-rupenayam nirupyate:
Ayameva vilaso'sya sphutam satyonubhuyate." (II-4)
"That very vilasa (the exuberant play) of the Lord is explained differently by different philosophers, and the experience of these very differences is, in fact, itself this same vilasa."

"Atmaika eva sadrupah kartrtvadi-vasad-ayam:
Cid-rupatvam vimrsati svanandaya Vilasatah." (II-12)
"Atman, the only existent reality, becomes aware of His consciousness for the purpose of illuminating His blissfulness. This happens through His vilasa and his infinite powers like omnipotence."

"Svatantrah saccidanandah svatmaramo Mahesvara:
Paramo'hammaho0rupi-svavilaso jayatyasau." (III-1)
"The Almighty God excels all. Having existence, consciousness, and blissfulness as His form, He enjoys ecstasy independently within Himself, and shines by virtue of His own vilasa as the Self-brilliant, infinite, and universal I-consciousness."

"A-brahma-stamba-parayantam yadvilasa-vasanugam:
Svaprakash sa Bhagavan svatantrah paramarthatah." (III-3)
"God alone is truly independent because He alone shines independently through the luminosity of his own pure consciousness. All other forms of life, from Brahma (the creator) to a lowly plant, operate under His vilasa."

"Jivata Sivata caiva sapeksa svavilasatah:
Aparamarthiki numan Kalpate svatmanaiva hi.
Avastha-dvitayatitam paripurnam kimapyaho:
Saccidananda-svarupam ahamtattvam tadasmyaham. (III-8,9)
"The mutually related concepts of jivahood and Shivahood are two comparative and interdependent concepts. Having been manifested by the Atman through His vilasa, these are not the absolute truth. There is a wonderful and perfect Reality, transcending both these concepts. It consists of existence, consciousness, and blissfulness, and is infinite Self-awareness. That am I."

"Sva-vilasa-svarupa sa vidyavidya-svarupini:
Mahavidya mahamaya paripurna jayatyasau." (IV-1)
"Prostrations to that Mahavidya, the absolute and correct knowledge, which, being basically the vilasa

of the Atman, excels all because It appears itself in the forms of relative knowledge and ignorance (vidya and avidya), It is all perfect in itself, and, being divinely potent, It is able to make even the utterly impossible possible."

"Vilasollasitattvena Vidyavidye to cetane.
Apurnatvad jade te sto jadajade ime tatah." (IV-2)
"Both vidya and avidya are sentient by virtue of their having been brought to full bloom by the vilasa (of the Atman). However, being imperfect, these are partly insentient as well."

"Sva-vilasenavarudhah aruru-ksuh svayecchaya:
Arohate sadanando nairmalyollasa-panditah." (IV-4)
"The ever-blissful Lord is an expert in raising purity to its full bloom. He, having descended (to the grossest levels) through His vilasa, and ascending again (to the subtlest levels), in accordance with His own will, rises up (to perfection), while experiencing His Self-bliss throughout the whole process."

"Sva-vilasena sarvani Kurvan karmani sarvada;
Dipa-vat saksimatro'yam vyavaharaya kalpate." (V-14)
"While always carrying out all His transactions through His vilasa, and like a lamp, being merely a witness to everything that occurs, He conducts all His divine activities in the midst of His exuberant dance."

"Nija-sahaja-vilasollasitam visvarupam
Anupama-citi-vahnavahutim homayantah:
Adhi-hrdi viya-yante purna-nairmalya-bhajah." (V-24)
"Perfectly pure beings, having evolved the world through their own natural vilasa, and offering all things as oblations to the sacred fire of their own pure and perfect consciousness, excel all while drinking deep the nectar of the blissfulness of their own vilasa, vibrating within their hearts."

"Kurvan sadaiva vasudhadi-sivanta-tattva-
Rupam prapancamakhilam sva-vilasa-matrat;
Kartrtva-lesa-rahitah khalu yo'dvitiyah
Svatma sadaiva nanu rajati purnakarta." (VI-24).
"The Atman, being without a second, constantly conducts the manifestation of the tattvas from earth to Siva through His vilasa alone, while forever remaining totally free of all responsibility for any deeds. He simply shines always as the perfect do-er of everything."